BELLGROVE CASTLE.

A ROMANCE.

LANE, MINERVA-PRESS, LEADENHALL-STREET.

BELLGROVE CASTLE;

OR,

THE HORRID SPECTRE!

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY T. H. WHITE.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
PRINTED AT THE
Minerva-Press,
FOR LANE AND NEWMAN,
LEADENHALL-STREET.
1803.

BELLGROVE CASTLE;

OR,

THE HORRID SPECTRE!

CHAPTER I.

"THE present possessor of that mansion, sir, once thought himself the happiest man alive.

"Blessed in the society of an affectionate wife, to whom the endearing ties of love, and not of interest, had united him, he considered himself as arrived at the highest state of human felicity.

"The moments passed in quick succession, and were devoted entirely to the study of making each other happy.

"Their union was auspicious in every point of view; their parents beheld their attachment with delight; and all who knew the parties were happy to see sense, prudence, and beauty, united to honour, wit, and manly charms!"

"Thrice happy they, the happiest of their kind,
"Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate
"Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings
"blend!"

THOMSON.

"You will excuse me, sir, for apostrophizing; but my favourite author seems to crown the description so exquisitely, that I could not refrain from introducing him."

Orlando

Orlando bowed, and the doctor proceeded.

" Palemon and Lavinia, the names of this happy pair, enjoyed a series of such bliss, as they fondly imagined would never be interrupted. To add to their joy, at the expiration of a twelvemonth, Lavinia presented her husband with a son and heir, an event which was the occasion of universal joy at the mansion.

" Splendid entertainments were given. The poor for miles around were invited to partake of the hospitality; every thing was mirth and gaiety.

" Palemon doated on his cherub, and Lavinia indulged in sweetest expectations of his inheriting the endearing perfections of his father.

" In the course of another twelve-

 month

month, Lavinia increased the universal joy in the birth of a daughter, who was caressed with equal fondness by the doating parents, whose happiness now would admit of no increase.

"Alas! it was happiness too exquisite to last!"

"But not to anticipate events, the young Pamelon grew up in every respect, the counter-part of his father; and the beautiful Lavinia partook of all her mother's graces.

"At the age of eighteen he was sent to travel, and returned with all the fascinating attractions of the accomplished gentleman and scholar.

"During his travels he had met with a youth of fortune, whose disposition was so congenial with his own, that

that soon produced a reciprocal esteem between them.

" Rinaldo took every pains to amuse Palemon, and expressed himself highly pleased in the discovery of so agreeable a friend.

" As he had no particular destination allotted him, he accompanied Palemon through the whole of his travels. Their friendship increased daily, and the latter, when he arrived in England, insisted on the company of his friend a few weeks at his father's mansion.

" The parents of Palemon were waiting with anxious expectation the arrival of their son, and at length received him with the fondest demonstrations of joy.

" The young Lavinia ran, with a countenance full of inexpressible glad-

ness, to embrace her brother, who returned it with that cordial affection he he had ever entertained for his sister.

" Palemon introduced his friend, who had every mark of esteem and respect shewn him by his parents.

" The moment Rinaldo cast his eyes on his friend's sister, he was struck with admiration at her charms.

" Lavinia, indeed, was too interesting a figure to look at with indifference; and the former, who was quickly susceptible of female beauty, thought he had never beheld so fascinating a person.

" He blessed the happy incident that had paved the way for so fortunate an interview.

" The parents of Palemon were inexpressibly

pressibly happy in beholding the harmony of the young party, and the mutual satisfaction which subsisted between them in all their undertakings.

"At times, the two friends would amuse themselves with the chace.

"And often Lavinia would join them in a fishing party, where, on the beautiful stream that ran in various meanders through the grounds, they beguiled the passing hours.

"Generally, on evenings, they formed a little concert, in which Lavinia lent her part, and sometimes would charm them with a solo on the piano-forte; and, not unfrequently, they added grace to a neighbouring ball.

"So gaily passed the hours, when, one evening, as the elder Palemon and Lavinia were returning from a walk to the

the extent of their gardens, they overheard Rinaldo in conversation with their daughter, and, from some expressions which fell from the latter, they had too great reason to believe she had lost her heart, and that their son's friend was the object of her affection.

" They saw in Rinaldo every agreeable qualification to make their daughter happy; but, how great was their chagrin, when, upon a closer attention to the dialogue, they clearly understood, that she possessed not an equal return of his affection.

" It was, indeed, a discovery that threatened a fatal blow to the exquisite happiness they had enjoyed, and they returned home oppressed with the most disconsolate and heart-rending ideas.

" In process of time, there was a visi-

a visible and melancholy alteration in poor Lavinia.

" Instead of that blooming complexion which she formerly possessed, her cheeks became pale and wan; her strength failed her; she grew pensive and solitary, and rejected, with disgust, all the amusements she used so fondly to delight in.

" Her parents saw, with inexpressible anguish, this change, the cause of which Lavinia frankly acknowledged arose from the unguarded impulses of a too credulous heart.

" The young Palemon, soon as he found that his sister was become the victim of his friend's duplicity, broke out into curses and vowed the bitterest revenge.

" The unhappy father and mother

were now under the most dreadful dilemma, in a two-fold respect.

" In one instance, they could see no hopes of Lavinia's recovery; and in the other, they dreaded the consequence of their son's resentment.

" Stung with anguish, they intreated him to curb his impetuosity, and not rashly run into a danger, that might render their calamity double.

" The distracted mother, even on her knees, implored him to pity their sufferings, and not increase their affliction by an additional disaster.

" Palemon embraced her with the utmost tenderness and assured her, he should ever have a watchful eye both to the happiness as well as to the honour of the family.

" This

" This equivocal answer by no means pacified the agitated parent. She continued to intreat him to revoke all ideas of revenge.

" Palemon knew not how to act in such a case of perplexity.

" He loved his parents with the most impassioned tenderness; at the same time, his fondness for his sister made him ardently desire to act in opposition to their will.

" Thus situated, he said every thing to calm their apprehensions, and at length obtained his point so far, as to gain their confidence and restore to them their usual composure of mind.

" He then left them, and paid an anxious visit to his unfortunate sister, whom he found in the very attitude of melancholy, and with an air and ap-

pearance so impaired, as convinced him she was hastening rapidly to the grave.

"He started as he entered, and stood momentary in the attitude of grief and consternation at the sight; but, recovering himself, he advanced to her (the tear trembling in his eye) and exclaimed---"For the love of God, tell me, my unhappy sister, if I can, in any way, alleviate your sufferings? Recollect, my dear Lavinia, that the life of your tender parents, as well as my own, are involved in your fate."

"Ah! my affectionate brother," replies the feeble Lavinia, "do not blame me for what is not in my power now to avoid.

"There was a time when I had sufficient strength and fortitude for such

an

an exertion; but the opportunity is fled, never more to return; and I bow with resignation to my untimely fate!"

"Lavinia! do not," cries Palemon, "become the willing victim of affliction! Perhaps, even now, hard as may be the struggle, a few endeavours might help you towards recovery."

"Never! never more, in this world, will your sister appear as she once was used. The disease lies here," (placing her hand to her breast) "lies deeply here!"

"Alas!" exclaims Palemon, "must a passion for one, who so little merits your regard, destroy the peace of a whole family?

"Once more I request you, in the most pathetic manner, to strive against it." "Spare

"Spare me, my brother!---Spare me from a subject like this. If I have incautiously bestowed my affections, let my fault be buried in my grave!"

"I mean not to chide you," cries Palemon (bursting into tears), "I come to console you.

"Forget, my dear Lavinia! forget there ever was one who could so basely rob you of them."

"Do not be too severe, Palemon; frailty is in our nature; and, though I feel an aching heart at an unrequited attachment, still---still I wish all happiness to the author of my woe."

"Is it possible such a monster exists, who could slight such worth and excellence!"

"Slight

" Slight me, he ought; slight me, he must," exclaims Lavinia, and (shedding a flood of tears) continued---" Oh that Rinaldo had ever looked upon me with indifference!"

" This is too much, ye avenging Gods!" cries Palemon; and the deep sympathy he felt for his sister's affliction, for a while obstructed utterance.

" At length recovering his speech, ---" If Rinaldo be the villain---thus to sport with angelic feelings---by Heavens! * * * * *"

" Be calm, Palemon, Rinaldo can do nought now but resign me to my fate!

" There is an insuperable bar to our affection."

" Explain,

"Explain, explain the cause; it is a mystery which harrows up my soul."

"Oh, Palemon!" cries Lavinia, "never would your unhappy sister have directed one look towards Rinaldo, had she but known * * * * * * * * * * *

"Lavinia would have fled to the remotest part of the earth, had she been acquainted * * * *"

"For Heaven's sake," exclaims Palemon, "explain the reason!"

"Summons up, then, all your fortitude, all your prudence and resignation," replies Lavinia, "when I tell you Rinaldo is married, and your sister is made the most wretched of all human beings!"

"Perdition

"Perdition seize the villain," cries Palemon, with a start; striking his forehead with his hand;---"May all the powers * * * * *"

"Palemon forbear," says Lavinia, in the most plaintive manner,---"forbear these tumults! Rage can be of no service to me now!

"Pity my enfeebled state. Think of the short time I have to be with you; and let me die with the hopes that you will not avenge my sufferings. Live to be the staff and prop of two amiable parents!"

"Palemon, struck with the alarming condition of his sister, who sunk into a fit on uttering these expressions, flew to her assistance, and, seeing her slowly recovering, begged she would forgive the excesses he had been guilty of; that he was now more composed, and

and would pay her another visit in a short time.

"Palemon retired; but with a heart full of rage and indignation. His sister's wretchedness and approaching end, goaded him to desperation. In a moment he forgot every promise, every resolution he had made; and, rushing out of the house, without uttering a syllable, threw himself into a chaise, and went in pursuit of Rinaldo..

"I should have mentioned" cries the doctor, "that a coolness had subsisted between Palemon and Rinaldo for some time. The latter began to be conscious of the baseness of his conduct, and took every means to shun the company of his friend. At length he framed an excuse for absenting himself altogether, intimating, that his friends at Derby had insisted on a visit from him.

"Palemon,

" Palemon, therefore, knew where to find his insidious friend.

" Rinaldo, at first sight, endeavoured to avoid him; but the former exclaiming in a public coffee-room---" Sir, I have businees with you, which no gentleman can honourably decline." The latter dreading an open exposure, thought proper to accompany Palemon.

" Rinaldo anticipated the nature of the visit, and intreated his friend to be calm in whatever business he had to communicate.

" Palemon darted a look of indignation at him, and exclaimed---" I am come, sir, for the dreadful purpose of avenging a sister's wrongs!

" What diabolical agency could have prompted you to a kind of conduct

duct unworthy of a man, and subversive of all the laws of hospitality, justice, or humanity? But I spend my breath upon a villain, who, long ago, ought to have been expelled society. Follow me, this instant, and atone for a crime barbarous and inhuman to the highest degree."

"Rinaldo bore all this with a kind of submission which his adversary considered as an instance of that pusillanimity, which ever accompanies conscious guilt.

"He cast his eyes downward, appeared dejected, and a sigh escaped him.

"Palemon seeing him hesitate for a reply, thought it an artifice to ward off an explanation.

"Grown furious at Rinaldo's perfidy,

fidy, Palemon took him by the collar and exclaimed---" By Heavens, if you do not immediately confess, I will drag you through the place and publicly expose your baseness and villainy!"

" The pride of Rinaldo now took fire.

" All the language which he had heard, however mortifying, he sustained with patience; his heart, indeed, smote him for the injury he had done Palemon's family. He was not altogether destitute of honour or humanity; a sense of shame and remorse had, in reality, made him wretched ever since.

" But, roused by this degrading act of violence, he sprung from his adversary's grasp, and exclaimed---

" Enough,

"Enough, sir! I will gratify your inclination any way."

"They now walked in sullen indignation to the top of the town, where Palemon took from the chaise he had left there, the usual instruments of death.

"The exasperated friends now crossed over a field, and came into a close quite retired from public view.

"Palemon, hear me," cries Rinaldo, just as the former was offering him the choice of his weapons; his full heart willing to make all the compensation in his power.

"No parleying now," cries the former, "all that you can say will never expiate your guilt.

"Take your choice," (presenting him

him a pistol and a sword) " and don't provoke me to act the part of an assassin."

" Rinaldo still remonstrated; but Palemon was inexorable, and, putting the point of his sword to Rinaldo's breast, exclaimed---" Villain! stand on your defence, or you instantly die!"

" Rinaldo put back Palemon's sword, hoping still to prevail; but Palemon, considering this as accepting the challenge, exclaimed---" Now, miscreant! take the reward of thy perfidy."

" Rinaldo, seeing him aiming a thrust, snatched up the sword he had thrown aside, and in a moment beat off the longe made at him.

" Palemon, infuriated to an excess,

repeated

repeated the attack, and Rinaldo, finding all remonstrances vain, stood on his defence.

"The contest soon became serious, several thrusts were received on both sides; at last Palemon, grown desperate even to madness, made a furious pass at his adversary, which entered his side, at the same moment receiving the point of Rinaldo's sword through his heart.

"They both fell at this instant. Palemon expired without a groan; and Rinaldo lay bleeding, and at the point of death.

"It happened that Palemon's application to the chaise was noticed by the driver, who, suspecting what was about to take place, alarmed the neighbourhood; and, having collected a few assistants, hurried to the spot. They arrived just in time to see the combatants

tants fall; but too late to prevent the mischief!

" Rinaldo, in his expiring moments, exclaimed---" I have murdered my friend!---destroyed the peace of a once happy family!---and, by my baseness, have been accessary to my own end!---I die in despair!"

" They carried the dead bodies of the combatants into the town. Rinaldo was soon conveyed to his friends; and the corpse of Palemon was shortly after carried to his afflicted parents, whose agonies cannot be described, on beholding their only hope torn from them by a violent and untimely death.

" The anguish they endured at this accumulated disaster, made them frantic.

"The lovely Lavinia had expired but an hour before!

"The interview with her brother was too much for her exhausted frame to sustain; she at length sunk into the arms of her distracted friends, and spoke no more!

"Scarce had the unfortunate father retired from the clay-cold embrace of his daughter, when the pale and bloody corpse of their son, on whom they doated, was presented to their view.

"The unhappy mother swooned at the sight---and her afflicted partner ranged the room in all the horrors of distraction.

"The numerous friends of this once happy couple assembled round them to soothe their afflictions; but all attempts

tempts of this nature seemed to operate as provocatives to their melancholy.

"Say, who can minister to a mind diseased---
"Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow---
"Raze out the written troubles of the brain---
"And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,
"Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff,
"Which weighs upon the heart?"

SHAKESPEARE.

"The unhappy mother had received such a shock to her reason, that she raved day and night on the fate of her unfortunate children: nature at last was overcome, and she expired, calling on the names of Palemon and Lavinia.---The wretched father has ever since been disconsolate.

"He lives in a state of sullen and solitary grief---and no kind efforts of his friends can induce him to mingle with society. He never stirs out of the house but on a visit to the graves

 of

of his departed wife and children; and, bedewing the turf with his tears, devotes the rest of his time to melancholy retirement."

The doctor now finished his story, and, looking upon his companion, observed the tear of sympathy start from his eye. The doctor considered this as an unquestionable evidence of the goodness of his heart---but, unwilling to throw too great a gloom on the conversation, exclaimed—

" Come, sir, though I admire the instance you have shewn of commiseration for the unfortunate, we will not ponder on such melancholy scenes, which, however (you will excuse my freedom), afford an excellent lesson to persons of your time of life—to curb the impetuosity of youth, and to make a young man very choice of his company."

Orlando

Orlando thanked the doctor for this admonitory address—which he had no doubt he should feel the advantage of—in his future progress in life.

The conversation now took a lively turn—and the doctor entertained his companion with a variety of anecdotes, which made the time pass very agreeably.

The two friends travelled post all the way, each being anxious to arrive at his respective habitation.

It was a pleasant day to both, and the conversation that had passed not a little heightened their esteem for each other.

Orlando, as he drew near to Bell-grove Castle, requested the doctor to alight, and refresh himself; but the latter politely declined, saying---" He must

must make all haste to the vicarage---at which place he should be happy to see his friend, as soon as he chose to pay the visit."

Orlando felt a dulness seize him when on the point of separation from his friend, to whom he had given every instance of respect, and also the strongest assurances of the happiness which a future correspondence would confer upon him.

Our hero observing the doctor's impatience to reach the vicarage, would not occasion him delay, by taking the chaise out of the direct road---but, after an affectionate leave of him, alighted---and, while the doctor directed his way to his home, Orlando walked across the lawn to the castle.

CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

ORLANDO was received with the greatest joy by the family on his return home. His cousin Osmond, who was likewise come back, ushered him into the house with great cordiality, and appeared with an uncommon degree of cheerfulness in his countenance, while the baron and baroness welcomed him with heart-felt pleasure and satisfaction.

"My dear boy," cries the former, "I am inexpressibly happy to see you; I have had many unpleasant ideas upon my mind ever since your departure.

"I would request of you the particulars of your journey, but you want rest, and to-morrow will do as well for the purpose."

Orlando thanked the baron for his goodness, and immediately flew to his mother, whom he caressed with the strongest symptoms of filial duty and affection.

He afterwards spent the evening in mutual congratulations with his friends, to whom his arrival and the recovery of his father, occasioned a more than ordinary satisfaction.

The next morning the baron meeting Orlando, exclaimed—"My dear boy, I have news to inform you: Lord Horrordale, persisting in his resentment against me, has, I find by this letter, bequeathed the Horrordale estate to Osmond's father (to whom you know

know he was related, and with whom he lived on terms of great intimacy)—a circumstance which now empowers your cousin to take possession of the property.

"You will not, however, feel any chagrin about the affair, as the poor youth was totally unprovided for; and on your own part, you are conscious there can want no addition to the considerations it will be in my power to bestow upon you."

The generous youth felt great satisfaction at the occurrence, which, he said, he longed to congratulate Osmond upon, whom he wished might long continue to enjoy it.

"Well said," cries the baron, "I like your nobleness of soul: But now tell me a little about your adventures since you departed from us."

Our hero then entered into a minute description of his sufferings at Horrordale Castle, at which his father started every-now-then, exclaiming—"Horrible! truly horrible!"

When he had finished the account, the baron, with a look of astonishment, asserted—"He could not have believed such atrocious and inhuman instances could have existed under the roof of any civilized individual.

"Surely," continued he, "a herd of banditti must have taken possession of the castle."

"That is assuredly the case," replies the former, "every incident confirms one in the opinion, that it is the resort of a crew of lawless plunderers."

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaims the baron, "we must make Osmond acquainted

quainted with this affair, to prevent his meeting with a similar surprise."

"It is difficult to say," cries Orlando, "what kind of footing the ruffians may possess in the castle; at all events, I think their own policy will induce them, the first moment, to escape; not but that I would recommend to my cousin Osmond to use every possible caution and security."

While they were in discourse, the person of whom they were talking made his appearance.

Orlando flew to congratulate his cousin; the baron at the same time accosting him (with an air of alarm) "So, Osmond, there is additional news to what I informed you yesterday. Horrordale Castle entertains a fine group of guests, I find; no less than a band of murderers."

The countenance of Osmond changed at this remark. He looked confused, and stammered out, "Murder, sir!—Where? where?"

"Upon my word," cries his uncle, what I have heard seems very alarming.

"I would advise you, by all means, to carry a strong party when you go to take possession."

He then recapitulated to him the account he had received from Orlando, evincing at the same time no small concern for his personal safety; to secure which, he advised immediate and the most strenuous efforts, saying, "He himself would, in as little time as possible, procure the necessary means, and accompany his nephew on the occasion."

After

After which he concluded with expressing the greatest indignation at the atrocities mentioned, and evinced much impatience to bring the authors of them to justice.

During the baron's discourse, Osmond exhibited many changes of countenance; sometimes he looked embarrassed; at others seemed to be greatly exasperated.

When the baron had finished, he appeared to pay the most obsequious attention to his advice; but, recollecting himself suddenly, intimated, that he thought the collecting the assistants necessary at Bellgrove, and conveying them to Horrordale, would be attended with almost insurmountable difficulties, and hinted to his uncle, that the most effectual means to surprise the villains might be obtained at no great distance from that place; and,

and, as it was his intention to visit Horrordale in a short time, he would take care to furnish himself with sufficient security in his approach to the castle.

Osmond used considerable eloquence on the subject; and the baron, seeing the case very plausible, after a few cautionary replies, at length acquiesced.

They now entered into a discourse respecting the management and arrangement of Osmond's affairs, not that he was disposed to solicit advice; on the other hand, he was very reserved on the business; but the goodness of the baron's heart made him assiduous in concerting a variety of plans, which he thought would contribute to the welfare of his nephew; but, after all the pains taken, nothing could be obtained from Osmond but the

the appointment of a day for his departure.

Our hero had not been at home more than a day or two, when he grew impatient, from something more than motives of mere friendship, to pay a visit to the doctor.

The idea of love and friendship made up a pleasing sentiment in his mind.

The smiles of Monimia, and the agreeable influence of the doctor's esteem, produced a heaven in his thoughts, which he wished ever to feel the influence of.

He had mentioned to the baron his adventure with the doctor, at which his father exhibited great marks of satisfaction.

"I have

"I have heard much of this gentleman," cries the baron, "though I have never yet had an opportunity of cultivating a friendship with him.

"However, your visit, I hope, will be the means of bringing such an affair about; and I beg you to use every solicitation in your power to introduce him among us."

Orlando requested his cousin Osmond to accompany him in his visit to the doctor, which being ageed upon, the two youths set out the next morning, promising themselves much amusement in the course of the day.

They mounted their coursers rather earlier than their usual time of riding.

The day was fine, and afforded, through the various windings and turnings of the road, many delightful prospects. The

The pride and spirit of the animals they rode could hardly be kept in check.

The pomp and fire they shewed in surveying the distant grounds, and snuffing up the freshening breeze, shewed they were intent upon speeding over hill and dale in all the pride of the chace.

The gaiety of the riders, too, was inspired to a more than usual pitch--- and to increase still further their hilarity, a pack of hounds in full cry came in view.

Osmond immediately gave the rein to his horse, who instantly followed the hounds; and Orlando, finding his steed for the moment unmanageable, galloped off to accompany his cousin.

In a little time they found themselves in all the joys of the pursuit.

Sometimes in alternate conference with each other---and at others divided, in a promiscuous conversation, with the followers of the chace.

Both had, however, become so animated with the sports of the day, as insensibly to have deviated from the track which led to the vicarage.

Orlando (whose high respect for the doctor, and a concern of a tender nature now checked his velocity) curbed his horse, and looked about for his companion; but he was out of sight. Our hero thought it in vain to attempt coming up with him; he, therefore, set about recovering the road to the vicarage.

He now led his horse by the side of

a wood, which at last brought him to a common, in an avenue of which stood a small cottage, so embowered in a cluster of trees, that he would have passed it unnoticed but from a very particular circumstance which took place just as he came within view of it.

"Heaven look down with an eye of compassion on my woes!" cried a forlorn female, of interesting figure, clasping her hands together, and sighing in the most piteous manner.--- "Shall the best of fathers perish for want of common necessaries, and no pitying eye compassionate his calamity!

"Oh God! Oh God! where shall I fly for succour in this dreadful moment!"

Our hero, whose feelings were

quickly

quickly susceptible of human sufferings, flew on eagles wings to assist a female in distress.

He took her by the hand, and conjured her in the most earnest manner to acquaint him with her woes.

"Alas! sir," cries the lovely girl, "your offers are, I fear, too late: in this lonely habitation lies expiring one of the best and worthiest parents. An hour sooner, and my fondest hopes, perhaps, had been realized."

Orlando soothed this female suppliant in the most tender manner, and ardently solicited an immediate sight of the object of distress.

The young woman ushered him into the cottage, where he beheld, extended upon a miserable pallet, an emaciated figure, who wore the appearance of having seen better days. Upon

Upon a nearer approach, he discovered it to be an elderly man, seemingly at the point of death.

Orlando made signs that he came to his assistance; upon which the sick man attempted to rise to take a view of his humane deliverer; but vain was the attempt, he could only reply by a mournful shake of the head.

"Be comforted," cries our hero, "relief is at hand."

"Father of mercies!" exclaims the sufferer, recovering just strength to articulate, "thy decrees are just!--- Help me to sustain them without repining!"

Orlando cast his eyes about the room for some refreshment, but found the unhappy man had nothing to sustain nature, but a mouldy crust and a little water. Not

Not a moment was to be lost---with the utmost speed he mounted his horse, which he had fastened to a branch of a tree, and rode off to a house he saw at about a mile distant.

This was fortunately a public-house. He instantly procured some brandy and biscuits---and on his return qualified the liquor, and applied some of it to this unfortunate patient.

The afflicted person was so much exhausted, that it was with the greatest difficulty Orlando could convey the least drop to his stomach. At length he succeeded; but the sufferer swooned in the attempt, and some minutes elapsed before he discovered any signs of life.

The humane visitor eagerly watched the faintest hopes of recovery, and observing a favourable moment, ap-

plied

plied another portion of the cordial, which, to his infinite satisfaction, revived the spirits of the unfortunate man, who, opening his eyes, cried, " Alas! to what kind being do I owe the present fortunate moment! Surely some compassionate angel is now sent to relieve a wretch on the confines of death, and in the agonies of despair!

" Oh, sir, words cannot be adequate to my feelings---yet, let me say, I wish ten thousand blessings may be showered down upon you for your benevolence and humanity."

Orlando requested his patient not to exhaust himself, but to endeavour to obtain both composure and rest.

At the same time said every thing to console his afflicted daugher, who was dumb with grief, and who could express her gratitude only by a mournful shake of the head. He

He now took his leave, promising to return the next day, and assured the unhappy girl that he would send every possible assistance to her disconsolate father.

He then departed; but so intent upon the scene he had just witnessed, as to wander about a great while before he arrived in the direct road for the vicarage.

He took care, however, to provide a person at the first house he came to, to superintend the sick man, and left money sufficient to answer any expence that might be necessary.

On his arrival at the track which led to the doctor's habitation, to his satisfaction he beheld Osmond advancing towards him; who, flushed with the joys of the chace, spoke of the entertainment he had met with in the

the most lively manner, and assured Orlando, that the thoughts of losing his company for the whole of the day alone, restrained him from continuing to the finish of the sport.

Orlando explained to his cousin the reason of his delay,—a recital which drew from him the warmest expressions of pity.

When they approached the vicarage, he, in a jocular manner, cautioned Osmond to guard his heart, as they would soon have an opportunity of beholding the most beautiful female in the world.

Osmond was a perfect Machiavel in all his operations; but particularly so with regard to love. He received Orlando's intimation with an air of indifference, at the same

moment that he meditated plans to secure the unknown fair for his own purposes.

CHAP.

CHAPTER III.

DR. PRITCHARDS received his visitors in the most courteous and affable manner.

To Orlando he paid very particular attention, and congratulated himself on the circumstance of a visit, which, he assured him, he had entertained hopes of every day since his arrival.

The doctor, after ushering the gentlemen into the parlour, intreated them to excuse his presence for a few minutes, in the mean time hoped they would entertain themselves with his

study, or any other agreeable object the room afforded.

Orlando advanced towards the window, attracted by the agreeable prospect which appeared from thence; while Osmond, whose soul was not alive to the beauties of nature, seated himself in pensive silence near the spot.

The view was picturesque; it conveyed the eye over fields covered with verdure, with cottages and villages interspersed, a beautiful stream of water also, which took its various windings through the midst, added a richness to the scene.

Not less pleasing to Orlando were the objects on a nearer view:

The timid and cautious trippings of the hare, who stole in and out the wilderness;

The

The blackbird and thrush, who flitted from one part of the thickset hedge to the other;

The fishes sporting on the surface of the pond, the margin of which was covered with full-grown tufted grass; and the little lambs frisking on the lawn---all contributed to raise in our hero's mind the most pleasing sensations.

His attention was, however, on a sudden drawn off to behold an incident which interrupted his reflections, and which, like the demon of the summer storm, cast a gloom upon the whole scene.

A beautiful dove came flying with great speed across the lawn, pursued by a hawk of an unusual size.

The affrighted bird tried every artifice

fice to escape the greedy talons of its pursuer. She took several mazy and winding directions, moaning in the most piteous manner; but all her efforts to escape proved fruitless. Her vigilant destroyer followed close in every direction, and, with a sudden dart, grasped the fugitive in his rapacious claws and scattered her beauteous plumage over the lawn.

"By Heavens," cries Orlando (seizing a gun that stood in a corner of the room), thy voracious appetite shall pay dear for this outrage," and was just at the point of presenting it out at the window, when the doctor entered, leading the accomplished Monimia.

Love instantly disarmed him of his rage; for a moment he stood gazing on her charms, and then flew to ex-

press

press the happiness he felt at this interview.

Monimia received him with a blush and satisfaction in her countenance, that denoted the pleasure she felt at the interview.

The doctor joined in the mutual congratulations of the persons present. A very agreeable conversation took place among them, which was not a little enlivened by the young gentlemen accepting the invitation of the doctor to dine and spend the day with him.

The company now sat down to a little entertainment of cake and wine; after which, that gentleman conducted his visitors about his grounds, which were arranged and laid out in such taste and elegance of fancy, as excited the admiration of the beholders.

 At

At the bottom of the garden was erected a beautiful summer-house, into which they entered, and viewed with no small delight this enchanting little paradise around them.

In the course of the day, the doctor received an addition to his company, by a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Beaumont, who resided in a small neat house at no great distance. Mr. Beaumont had once been in possession of a large property, which, however, was now diminished into, comparatively, a very slender sum.

It was not difficult to assign a reason for this revolution in his circumstances.

His concerns lay chiefly in West-India speculations, which, though very lucrative in the beginning, by an accu-

accumulation of ill luck, was sunk into merely nothing.

At first, Mr. Beaumont found this transition in his affairs not very easy to be submitted to; and when his furniture, equipage and town-house, in St. James's-square, were to be exchanged for a recluse little cot, destitute of stately appendages, he could not meditate on the change without a sigh.

His dejection, however, was considerably alleviated by the conversation of an amiable wife, who, in the most placid manner resorted to their homely habitation, which she persuaded her husband had more charms, in her esteem, than the gaudy splendour of high life.

It was a fortunate circumstance for the merchant, that he was allied to a

woman of such excellent sense and economy, as his valuable spouse possessed in a high degree.

By a certain air of cheerfulness, in the worst of times, and a studious regard for his happiness, she contrived, in a variety of instances, to take off his attention to his former state, and to win him to a submission of his reverse of fortune.

Mr. Beaumont was, indeed, a man of sense, possessing many agreeable qualities; but there was a degree of impatience in his nature, which took alarm often on trifling occasions, and which was increased to a degree of melancholy in cases of a serious description.

His amiable wife saw, with uneasiness, this infirmity, and levelled all her ingenuity and address to soften every

every incident that wore the appearance of misfortune.

Time, however, and a tender attention to a growing offspring, had produced such a uniform serenity of mind in this amiable couple, that they never felt a wish to emerge from their peaceful abode.

The doctor, from a long intimacy with the family, had contracted an invariable esteem for them, and had moreover, by his friendly admonitions, considerably assisted in restoring the peace of mind of his amiable friends.

Alternate visits from the cottage to the vicarage had passed in succession for many years, and at length had cemented their intimacy into a firm and inviolable esteem.

The arrival of this amiable pair con-

tributed, not in a small degree, to increase the happiness of the party, and the whole soon formed a scene of gaiety and amusement.

Monimia, at the request of the doctor, sat down to the harpsichord, and soon gave such a specimen of her powers in music, as at once captivated and delighted the company.

One air in particular went with such effect to the heart of her father, that he flew to her in raptures and requested a repetition, which, to the great satisfaction of the whole party, she, in the sweetest and most affable manner, complied with.

Orlando attended with admiration to the enchanting tones.

He had never been before so charmed; was, indeed, fascinated with

with her skill, and thought for a while he was listening to the melody of some celestial power.

When this exquisite treat was over, Mrs. Beaumont reminded the doctor of his promise to drink tea with them at the cottage; at the same time, earnestly requested the company of Osmond and Orlando, who were not a moment in giving their assent.

The company, after dinner, took a road to the cottage highly rural and entertaining.

They passed along a lane with a thick hedge on either side, lined with a row of tall and stately elm trees.

This path had various angles, each formed on a sudden eminence, which every now-and-then presented a delightful prospect.

At

At the extremity of the lane they crossed two or three verdant fields, affording a rich pasture to the cattle grazing thereon.

They then took to a path-way, so overshadowed with boughs and branches, that it appeared like a regular alcove all the way; at the end was a small inclosure, adjoining the common on which stood the merchant's residence.

Our party pursued their walk in a very lively manner.

The young sparks were particularly attentive to Monimia, whom they complimented much on her observations on various subjects, and the doctor was in familiar chat with the merchant and his lady, while, at intervals, he surveyed Monimia with an eye of tenderness and affection.

As

As they were crossing a field which led to the alcove, they were surprised with one of those showers which drop suddenly on the traveller without any previous notice, and soon the clouds began to gather and presented every symptom of an approaching storm.

At a distance was heard the murmuring thunder.

" 'Tis listening fear and dumb amazement all,
" When to the startled eye the sudden glance
" Appears far south, eruptive thro' the cloud;
" And following slower, in explosion vast,
" The thunder raises his tremendous voice!
" At first heard solemn o'er the verge of heaven,
" The tempest growls; but as it nearer comes,
" And rolls its awful burthen on the wind,
" The lightnings flash a larger curve, and more,
" The noise astounds; 'till over head a sheet
" Of livid flame discloses wide; then shuts,
" And opens wider; shuts, and opens still
" Expansive, wrapping ether in a blaze,
" Follows the loosen'd aggravated roar,
" Enlarging, deepening, mingling; peal on peal
" Crush'd horrible, convulsing heaven and earth."

THOMSON.

The protection of the ladies immediately engrossed the attention of the gentlemen.

By a sudden impulse of safety the party became divided: the doctor, the merchant, and his wife, with Osmond, hastened to the arbour in the lane—while Orlando, over anxious for his Monimia, and not knowing how long the storm might continue, flew with her to a barn, which stood on the other side of the field.

The day now assumed an emblem of the vicissitudes of man's life—a serene and unclouded sky was changed into a dark and gloomy shade; all was dreadful suspense; a cloud of immense size, and of an awful blackness, took its station exactly opposite where they stood, and suddenly from its bosom issued a tremendous glare, which, darting its angry form upon a hay-

hay-stack close by, the whole was immediately in a blaze.

At this moment Monimia fell senseless, but was caught in the arms of Orlando; who, panic-struck at her pale and lifeless form, for the moment thought she had received a fatal shock.

In an agony he exclaimed---" Heavens restore my charming Monimia!" and attempted, by vibrations from his hat, to recover her from the swoon.

In a little time, to his inexpressible joy, she revived; and, upon beholding her situation, exclaimed---" Good Heavens! Mr. Bellgrove, what is the meaning of all this?---Where? where is my father?" Orlando explained---and assured her, that as soon as the storm was over, they would go in search of the company.

The

The rain now came down with the impetuosity of a finishing shower; in the midst of which a female figure, miserably clad, and almost drowned with the wet, approached the barn.

The cries of the infant in her arms, her own lamentations to soothe it, and her deplorable habiliments, drew pity from the breasts of Orlando and the lady.

The miserable object dropped a courtesy as she entered the barn, and, sitting herself down on a bundle of straw that lay at the most solitary part of it, began to weep bitterly.

Monimia, now thoroughly recovered, approached her, and in the sweetest manner begged to be acquainted with her sorrow.

"Alas! lady," cries the unfortunate

nate woman, "my misery arises from my own indiscretion: I deserve every misfortune that can befall me; but my heart is ready to, to"—Here her sobs obstructed her utterance—"to break, when I think what woes my imprudence has brought on my innocent child."---Here she kissed it with an excess of fondness, while the tears flowed plenteously down her sorrowful cheek.

She now took off the miserable rag that covered the little innocent, and presented to view an infant, so comely and beautiful, that Monimia stood some time gazing on it with admiration.

"Do not, my good woman, distress yourself so much," cries the tender-hearted Monimia.

"Whatever may have been your

experience in life, I promise you, you shall not now want a friend---and that your lovely infant shall be protected from all danger of languishing for the necessary articles of subsistence."

So saying, she took out her purse, and gave her sufficient to comfort herself with; desiring her to go immediately to the first village, and do every thing she could to guard against cold, from the wetness of her apparel.

This benevolent lady also desired her to call the next morning at the vicarage---at which place she expressed a wish to have some further conversation with her.

The storm being quite over, and a bright sky returned, Orlando and Monimia ventured from their retreat.

When they had proceeded about half a mile,

a mile, they met the whole party coming in anxious search of them. The meeting was lively, after such an abrupt separation; and Monimia ran into the arms of her father, to congratulate him after the dangers of the storm.

The whole company now proceeded to the cottage, where the merchant and his lady contrived to entertain their visitants so well, that every alarm which the storm had produced was soon dispersed.

After tea, the party rose to return to the vicarage, which was strongly opposed by Mr. and Mrs Beaumont; but the doctor observing that the thunder had broke up the weather, and it appearing every now-and-then as though disposed to make a wet evening, the company were permitted, although reluctantly, to depart.

Orlando

Orlando and Osmond professed the warmest respect for the civilities and attention shewn them, and begged they might be honoured by a return of the visit.

The doctor and the young folks were not long before they arrived at the vicarage; and Orlando, having protracted the time to as late a period as he could with prudence, took a very respectful leave; and, mounting his horse, with his companion, returned with speed to the castle.

CHAP.

CHAPTER IV.

THE next morning Orlando mentioned to the baron and his lady, the case of the unfortunate man he had seen on the common, and hinted the pleasure it would afford him, if they would condescend to pay him a visit.

The baroness was a lady, as I have before observed, of great benevolence and humanity; insomuch, that she never listened to the tale of woe, but with the tear of compassion. She was one of those benign souls, who do not merely

merely wait to be informed of misery's abode---on the other hand, was indefatigable in her enquiries after objects of distress, snd never so happy as when it was in her power to relieve them.

This lady was a general patroness of charitable institutions, and had several little communities on her hands which depended solely on her own bounty.

No sooner, then, was she made acquainted with the sick man's situation than she ordered her carriage, and, taking Orlando with her for instruction in the way, set out with the kindest hopes of relieving him from his sad situation.

On their way, they called upon the apothecary, who lived about a mile off from the spot they were going to.

This

This gentleman was absent. Instructions were, therefore, left him to attend the sick man when he returned.

Our hero conducted his mother on foot across a field or two, there not being a coach-road to the habitation.

On entering the cottage, they beheld a scene, which the most unfeeling could not look on without emotion.

On one side of the wretched pallet kneeled the daughter of the afflicted person. She was bedewing his hands with tears, and appeared in the greatest agony of mind, every now-and-then looking up to heaven in the attitude of fervent prayer.

The baroness stood moved with pity at the sight; at length, when an interval from grief ensued, she advanced towards the unhappy maid, and

and began to use every expression of of pity and commiseration.

The affectionate girl, struck with the air and appearance of the lady, attempted for the moment to stifle her grief, but in vain; she was too much overcome, and could not refrain bursting into an emotion of sorrow.

When this affectionate young creature had in some measure recovered herself, she exclaimed—"Oh! madam, had you but arrived in time to save my poor father's life!"—Here her grief overcame her a second time, and she fainted in the arms of her benefactress.

The baroness used every pains to revive her, while Orlando examined the state of his unhappy pensioner.

At first he was led to believe, that the

the poor girl's fears were but too justly founded; there was no external appearance of life, and his countenance bore the exact resemblance of a corpse.

He was now about to consign him over as an inhabitant of the other world, when he recollected there might yet be a latent spark of life, notwithstanding the evidences before him; and, applying his hand to his heart, to his great joy found it palpitate.

He instantly turned his eyes to the weeping damsel, and exclaimed—"He lives!"

Upon which she sprang forward, and, to her inexpressible gladness, discovered something like the return of life about her father.

At this instant the apothecary ar-

 rived,

rived, who, by proper applications, restored his patient to some degree of sense and recollection.

The baroness advanced towards the bed, and beheld in the sick man's countenance, notwithstanding that poverty and grief had disfigured him, an air of respectability that denoted him to have formerly enjoyed the smiles of Fortune.

She raised his hand, and in the most condoling terms, requested him to be tranquil.

"Oh! most benevolent lady," cried the sufferer, "if pity in an angel's form could alleviate my woe, your kind efforts might prevail; but, alas! I am overpowered with misfortune, and all advice is now too late."

"Do

"Do not despair," cries the benevolent visitor.

"Alas! madam," answers the sick man, "my life has been such a series of misfortunes, as have at length overcome me.

"I yet could die happy, were my apprehensions eased on a subject which has long weighed me down in trouble and affliction."

The baroness intreated him to unburthen his mind; but he was so exhausted, as not to be able to say more for the present, than that he had committed to paper the principal part of his misfortunes.

The good lady seeing him disposed to doze a little, quitted the cottage, intending to return again in the course of the day.

 Before

Before she retired, she held a conference with the daughter, in which she comforted her with the strongest assurances of her countenance and protection.

At the same time directed her to make up several little restorative messes, and to apply some cordials occasionally, which she should send immediately on her arrival at the castle.

This worthy lady had infinite skill in this way, and, in the course of many years, had been accessary to the preservation of a great number of lives.

In the evening she paid a second visit to the cottage, and endeavoured to obtain from her patient a knowledge of the secret that so oppressed him.

The unhappy man now cast an eye of

of inexpressible tenderness on his daughter, and exclaimed—“ Ah ! madam, when I think on the virtue and dutiful conduct of that young woman, the pangs that I endure on the thoughts of leaving her unprotected and friendless, overwhelms me.

“ She has attended me through the whole of my affliction with more than mortal care. Never, never was a parent blessed with so amiable and affectionate a child !

“ I had another too, but alas ! she is no more ; or, perhaps, (what is worse) endures a life of poverty, infamy and disgrace !”

Here the tears trickled plenteously down his furrowed cheek.

“ Could I but take to my arms my long-lost child once more---I would

 forever

forever bury all thoughts of her indiscretion, and cherish her with the fondness I once was wont !"

The baroness seeing that her patient had touched upon a strain that lay heavy on his heart, requested him to forbear to dwell too intently on a subject which tended only to increase his anguish; observing, that, if it ever lay in her power, she would shew all the kindness she was able to exert, to restore the unfortunate person who had made so melancholy a breach in his happiness.

" As to this affectionate girl," continued she, " from this moment I adopt her as my own, and you may rely upon me when I say, that I will ever be to her a friend, and more---a mother."

Just as the baroness concluded this sentence,

sentence, the grateful young woman flew to her, and, on her knees, exclaimed---

"This is goodness unspeakable! You come like an angel of pity, my ever dear madam, to rescue both child and parent!

"Can I ever be sufficiently thankful, even for the good effects of your bounty, already visible in my father?"

The sick man now began to wear an aspect of serenity.

There was a brightness in his eye which denoted a placid submission, and, in short, he exhibited a composure in his whole countenance, which evinced, in a remarkable degree, the benign effects of the consolation he had received.

 The

The baroness was now on the point of retiring, highly gratified at the good which had taken place in consequence of her attention, when on a sudden the poor man was seized with convulsions, in which he struggled for a considerable while, without any signs of amendment.

At length the fit left him, but so languid was he after the shock, that they every moment despaired of his life.

The apothecary fortunately entered at this instant; but all the efforts of that gentleman could not restore him to his former degree of animation.

The baroness was, therefore, under the painful necessity of leaving him without much hope of his recovery.

On her departure, she requested the apothe-

apothecary to pay frequent visits to his patient in the course of the evening; and, on her arrival at home, sent a trusty servant, to assist her young friend in bestowing every possible relief upon her father.

The next morning she repaired to the cottage; but her kind offices were now at an end.

She met the disconsolate girl at the door, whose countenance denoted immediately the sad occurrence that had taken place.

The baroness felt all the disappointment of one whose intention is frustrated in a generous and benevolent design.

Her care now devolved solely upon the orphan.

With the most tender salute, she assured the distressed girl, that she should experience in her all the kind offices of a parent; and, taking the amiable sufferer by the hand, conducted her into the cottage, where she continued to use every consolation to calm her afflicted mind.

When Julia (the name of the young maiden) became a little composed, she took from a small box that lay in the room, a scroll of paper, and, presenting it to her benefactress, exclaimed—

"Here, madam, is a bequest which my father, when dying, desired might be delivered to you.

"His last moments, my dear lady, were calm and serene. 'I shall now die happy,' cries my dear parent; 'I leave you in the hands (God be praised!) of one, who, I am satisfied, will

will fully accomplish all my wishes respecting you."

The baroness took the paper and carefully put it into her pocket for perusal at some other period.

She then, after speaking in the most tender manner to Julia, began to hint about the interment of her father, intimating her intention of taking that concern upon herself, that every thing might be conducted with the utmost attention and respect.

She now proposed to carry Julia home with her, but the affectionate girl intreated (with tears in her eyes) that she might continue with her father to the last.

Julia's benefactress was pleased with this instance of filial regard, and allowed her by all means to gratify so dutiful an inclination.

When

When the baroness arrived at the castle, she took out the paper delivered to her, and was just on the point of opening it, when, observing the superscription—" I request that this " paper may not be opened till I am " in my grave,"—desisted from her purpose, and secured it in a cabinet allotted solely for writings of importance.

The baron had attended to the description of the case of the unfortunate man, with his usual degree of sympathy, and regretted that a man of worth and good sense, as he took him to be, should close his eyes in so unhappy a state.

He requested his lady to be particularly careful of the paper, as he thought some interesting and remarkable instances might be connected with the history of his misfortunes.

The

The baron was impatient to behold the amiable orphan, for whom, with his lady, he entertained sentiments of of parental affection.

He had been very desirous of paying a visit to Julia's father at the first, but some remains of his complaint still hanging about him, he was advised to use as little motion as possible.

He would have been glad to have heard the unfortunate gentleman's history from his own mouth, and to have rendered, personally, all the consolation in his power to one, who, he thought it not improbable, might have been formerly in circumstances equal to himself.

As the case stood, he determined to shew every possible tenderness to Julia, and to observe minutely and

and scrupulously, whatever might be the object of the dying man's request.

CHAPTER V.

WHILE the family at the castle were engaged in the benevolent and humane concern before stated, the good folks at the vicarage were exerting themselves in behalf of the unfortunate female, whom Monimia had met with in the barn.

This amiable girl had not mentioned the circumstance to her father till the next morning, when, as they were sitting at breakfast, she, in the sweetest manner imaginable, intreated the doctor's permission to assist a case of distress

distress she had the day before met with.

She then briefly stated the circumstance as it happened, during their separation in the storm.

The good divine lent an ear of compassion to the story, and highly approved of her design of enquiring further into the business.

Just as he was pronouncing his cordial consent, Monimia's pensioner made her appearance, who had contrived in the interval to array herself and child in neat, though homely apparel.

There was beauty in her person and elegance in her form, though the dress she wore in some measure disguised it; and, by her engaging air and manner, the doctor was convinced

she

she had formerly moved in a stile of respectability, if not of affluence.

Monimia took the baby and presented it to her father, who admired the sweetness of its countenance, while the little cherub intwined its fingers round his thumb and would not easily relinquish it.

The doctor walked up to the stranger and, with the greatest affability, desired her to sit down, and at the same time intimated, that he hoped she would spend the day with them.

Louisa (for that was the young woman's name) courtesied and replied---"If she could officiate in any useful capacity, she would accept of the invitation with infinite satisfaction."

He commended her readiness for employment, and observed---"He had no

no doubt but his daughter would contrive to find something to make her time pass agreeably."

Monimia instantly set about procuring some refreshment for her visitor and the child. The young creature, in the most humble and grateful manner, all the while expressing her obligations for the attention shewn her.

Monimia was charmed with the deportment of her guest, in whom she soon discovered such affability and good sense, as to promise to become a very agreeable companion to her.

The doctor was now about to take an excursion for the morning—a circumstance which left the two females entirely to themselves.

Monimia looked up a gown or two

and

and some other apparel, which she gave to Louisa to make into dresses for herself and child.

They then sat down and amused themselves with different employments of the needle, and were mutually pleased in the conversation of each other.

Monimia forbore for a while to make any enquiries of her companion respecting her misfortunes.

At length, when some conversation had taken place which led to an introduction, she intreated, if it would not too much oppress her feelings, to be favoured with a history of her sufferings.

Louisa blushed and hesitated. At length, encouraged by the strongest assurances of friendship and confi-

dence

dence on the part of her benefactress, in a tone of humiliation and regret, she thus began.—

"When I enter, my dear miss, upon my unhappy story, I feel such a train of painful sensations, as will hardly suffer me to proceed.

"To be innocently unfortunate, is a trial that requires continual fortitude to sustain; but when our sufferings arise from indiscretion, the burthen becomes almost intolerable.

"Could I recall those days ere first I raised a pang in a parent's breast!--- I can give no description of the happiness it would occasion me.

"Whole years of inquietude would I gladly suffer for such a blessing; but, alas! I fear the die is cast, and I shall carry remorse with me to the latest

latest period of my life, for slighting the good counsel of my indulgent parents, who, perhaps, ere now, have been hurried into their grave by my misconduct.

"My father was a gentleman of easy fortune, and married a lady who brought with her a sum sufficient, in addition to his own, to rear us in a genteel and comfortable style.

"My mother had several children, who lived little longer than a state of infancy; at length her family was reduced to only two, Julia and myself.

"My father bestowed anxious pains to educate us in the most accomplished manner. He, indeed, carried this point almost to a failing, not recollecting we should want fortunes to support us in the display of our attainments.

We lived some years in a state of enviable happiness, my kind parents thinking no expence too great that increased the perfections of their daughters, whose improvement in the different sciences, afforded them hourly satisfaction.

"I was now arrived at my eighteenth year, when a circumstance arose, from which I date all my misfortunes.

"At a neighbouring ball, I was solicited, in a very pressing manner, by a youth to accept his hand in a dance that was just going to begin.

"As I had made no previous engagement, I could assign no reason for refusing him. We, therefore, took our station and soon went down the dance.

"My

"My partner entertained me with many agreeable anecdotes, and, by his insinuating address, made time glide insensibly away.

"He was very assiduous in his attention to me during the whole of the evening, and spared no pains to make his company agreeable.

"I must confess his assiduities had that charm over me, that I could not help thinking him the most agreeable person I had ever met with.

"When the time arrived for me to depart, Mr. Bellamy (that was the name of my companion) affected a kind of dejection, and insisted, as some compensation for his uneasiness that he should have the pleasure of seeing me home.

"This I consented to, as I must

confess I had no objection to continue in his agreeable company for that time longer.

"My father opened the door when I got home, and, seeing a gentleman with me, requested him to walk in that he might have an opportunity of thanking him for his politeness.

"Mr. Bellamy good-naturedly refused, alledging his unwillingness to incommode him at that late hour, and took his leave in the most respectful manner.

"I saw nothing of my amiable partner for a whole week after this circumstance, during which, I cannot say but I was weak enough to wish something might happen to produce a second interview.

"It was not long before I was surprised

prised with the gratification of my wishes.

"Going upon a visit to a family who resided in a village not far from us, in the course of the day two gentlemen entered the room, introducing a third, in the person of whom I beheld my partner at the ball.

"The moment Mr. Bellamy saw me, he advanced towards me, and, in the most engaging manner, expressed his hopes that I had not fatigued myself, or caught any inconvenience since he saw me last, and then went on in a strain of inexpressible satisfaction at seeing me again, saying it was an event as happy to him as unexpected.

"I listened to his professions, alas! with a prepossession in his favour! I

thought, indeed, a form like his was too amiable to deceive!

"So little, indeed, was I acquainted with the human heart, that I considered every expression in my favour as the effusion of a sincere esteem—never dreaming for a moment Mr. Bellamy's professions evasive and insincere.

"I spent a happy day at Mr. Milford's in company with my amiable dissembler. There was a very lively party assembled; a variety of amusements ensued, and every one seemed to enjoy the highest pleasure and satisfaction.

"It was now time for me to return home, and, must confess, I quitted the company with a heavy heart.

"Previous to my retiring, I was requested

requested to renew the visit on some future day, and it was no small consolation to me, to hear Mr. Bellamy's name included in the general invitation, as I began to think society would lose all its charms without the company of that infatuating man.

"As I was upon my return, and meditating upon the pleasures I had left behind, I at length became dejected, and, just as a heavy sigh had escaped me, felt a sudden tap on the shoulder, and on turning round, to my surprise, beheld Mr. Bellamy.

"Why so pensive, miss?"

"Dear sir," I replied, "how you surprise me; I thought you had still been at Mr. Milford's."

"How could I delay a moment," exclaims

exclaims he, " and leave my charming partner unprotected?"

" It was my intention to have accompanied you from the house, but your departure was too sudden to afford me so happy an opportunity."

" We continued an agreeable conversation as we traversed the fields in my way home.

" Mr. Bellamy, among other things, was very pressing for another interview, at which, he said, he had a secret to impart, which nearly concerned the interest of us both.

" I started at this intimation, and begged he would now disclose any thing, especially of importance, that related either to himself or me.

" To this he objected, as the short time

time he should be in my company would not allow him to say all he could wish.

"Soon as I got home, I requested him to walk in, as I wished my father to be acquainted with a person who had become so necessary to my peace.

"But he pleaded a quick return to Mr. Milford's, as he had left his friends abruptly, which nothing but his extreme partiality for me could have induced him to do.

"Such was his ascendency over me, that I could not refuse him the private meeting he had proposed near a farm-house, about a mile off from our place of residence.

"I had several struggles with myself before I could consent to any clandestine proceedings; my heart smote

me for this insidious mode of conduct towards my parents; yet love had entangled me with its fascinating powers, and each dutiful resolution was speedily chaced away at the recollection of Mr. Bellamy.

"I had almost anticipated the nature of his particular business with me. There was an ardency of expression he in general used not common in mere formal acquaintance; and shall I venture to express my weakness so far as to say---'I thought---nay, I wish'd it a message of love!'

"The time now approached when I was to listen to this interesting subject, and, like a sworn foe to my own peace, I framed some excuse to my parents, that I might be punctual to my assignation.

"Mr. Bellamy was more than punctual

tual to the appointment; his impatience to see me was such, that I met him more than half way from the farm-house, coming towards our habitation.

"You see, my charming Louisa, what restless mortals love makes us; I have been walking for more than an hour, and never found time drag on so tediously."

"Am I behind the time, sir?" cries I.

"No, my dear miss; I do not mean to chide you; but when all that comprises our happiness in this life is absent from us, the interval of time is almost intolerable."

"Mr. Bellamy," exclaimed I (looking at him rather seriously), "if you invited me merely for the purpose of flattery, you act a more unfriendly

part than I thought you capable of."

"Can it be flattery," said he, "to tell Louisa, that her company is very agreeable?"

"I do not know," cries I (rather formally), "what may be Mr. Bellamy's motive for using a warmth of expression, which no part of my conduct can have authorised."

"Pardon me, my dear Louisa, nothing can be further from my ideas, than treating those with disrespect for whom I have the highest partiality."

"I begged him to forbear a language which it would not be prudent for me to hear without the consent of my parents."

"He said I must forgive him for

the

the ardency of his passion, to disclose which, was his principal object in requesting the interview."

" I again repeated, this was a subject to which I ought not to listen, unless sanctioned by the approbation and countenance of my parents, to whom I wished him to apply in an affair so interesting to their happiness, as well as my own.

" I repeated my wishes for him to cultivate an acquaintance with them; and, when a fair understanding was promoted between them, I might be disposed to listen to his professions.

CHAPTER VI.

"Mr. Bellamy appeared always shy of any personal intercourse with my father.

"Whenever I hinted the propriety of making known to him the intimacy we had formed, he evaded the subject, and generally with such art and address, as prevented me from speedily resuming it.

"His disinclination to such a measure at length alarmed me so much, that I protested I would immediately break off all correspondence with him, unless

less he would make me happy in this point.

"He, however, had the artifice to appear suddenly disposed to divulge his passion to my father, at length asserting that such a step was quite congenial with his wishes; and, at the same time, insinuated that my anxiety on this point increased his very high opinion of me.

"After this, he made one or two visits at our house; during which, as he informed me, he had acquired my father's most cordial approbation and consent.

"I made myself exceedingly happy at this intelligence, and conducted myself with a partiality for him in the presence of my parents, which I thought they could not disapprove of.

"But

" But I was woefully mistaken: for though, at the first, my father exhibited no signs of a dislike to him, yet, when he saw things in so serious a train, he grew peevish, and, in a gentle rebuke, chided me for my conduct.

" I appealed to the circumstance of his permitting Mr. Bellamy's visits at the first---to which he replied, " That he was induced to do so, from the high opinion he had formed of him; but that he had entertained different sentiments since that period, and now thought his views were not so honourable as he once imagined."

" My father, seeing a gloom and dejection arise from what he said, exclaimed---" I am inexpressibly sorry, my dear child, to see things have gone so far, as to make a parent's advice irksome to you; but you should have acquainted me with the matter before,

indeed

indeed you should---my persuasions would then have appeared kinder to you."

"I entreated him to forgive a weakness which my incautious conduct had made me subject to; but that I would make any sacrifice rather than give him a moment's uneasiness.

"This declaration gave him great pleasure; he embraced me with unusual fondness---and while the tear stole down his cheek, he uttered---"Oh, Louisa! you have relieved me of a burthen which I have not power to describe."

"My father now appeared with an air of satisfaction, which gave me great delight.

"I had, indeed, been so smitten with a sense of his uneasiness, that, for

for more than the moment, my duty and affection for my parent surmounted my highest notions and regard for Mr. Bellamy.

" Ah, madam! would it had pleased Heaven to have kept me in that sentiment till now! But love is tyrannical, and will have sovereign sway.

" No sooner had I resolved to see him no more, than a letter, which he contrived to get delivered to me, unfixed me in my resolution.

" When I had broken the seal, I read as follows :---

" My ever dear Louisa,

" I am very desirous of giving the most un-
" equivocal proof of my affection for you.

" I shall forbear entering into particulars in
" this---Suffice it to say, if you will favour me
" with a visit at the usual place to-morrow
" evening,

"evening, you will then have no longer reason
"to doubt the sincerity of my professions.

"C. Bellamy."

"The specious strain of this billet, I am sorry to say, revived in me all the fond sentiments I had entertained of him.

"Alas! the miserable effects of ill-placed love!

"How does it blind us to our own true and dearest interests, and subvert in us principles of duty best calculated to our happiness!

"The day that I met Mr. Bellamy conformably to his letter, I observed an unusual pensiveness in my father, a certain presage, alas! of his approaching woe. My mother, too, was confined to her bed with sickness.

"I was

"I was now distracted with contending resolutions; the state of my parents operated as a serious check to my going, and the nature of my visit in direct opposition to my father's injunctions, which now sounded more strongly in my ears than ever, made me start with emotion from the business I was about to undertake.

"On the other hand, my attachment to Mr. Bellamy was such, that I could not refuse what he in such honourable terms requested, without doing the greatest violence to my own feelings.

"Divided thus between love and duty, I spent a very disagreeable day; and such an effect had this conflict upon me, that my father more than once remarked the alteration in me.

"At length the time of assignation arrived—

arrived---What struggles! what trepidations! what pangs I endured at this moment!

" At last, persuading myself (alas! how pliable is love to its own purposes!) that the interview would detain me but a few minutes, and that my sister, who was just arrived from boarding-school, could bestow all proper attention on my mother in the interval, I thought no harm could ensue from the meeting.

" When love predominates, a trifle preponderates in its favour.

" To be brief, I met Mr. Bellamy at the time appointed.

" We entered into the most serious discourse---he avowed his passion for me in the most ardent terms, and said, ' The time was arrived, when he would

at

at once convince me of the honourableness of his intentions.'

"After crossing a field leading to a high road, we came to a stile, when I observed a post-chaise standing in the road.

"Mr. Bellamy asked me if I had any objection to take a little circuit round the village, as he could then make his proposals without the danger of interruption.

"I thought the offer perfectly innocent, and suffered him to hand me into the carriage.

"We drove off slowly, and continued a gentle pace for some time.

"He then began a conversation with me, in which he soon introduced marriage, assuring me he should ever

be

be wretched till we were indissolubly united, and that it would be the principal study of his life to make me happy.

"He entertained no kind of doubt, at the same time, that our union would be perfectly agreeable to my parents.

"Stay, my dear sir," cries I, "till I have received a similar confession from them."

"That you need not question a moment," replied he; "for I applied to them this morning, and received an answer every way favourable to my wishes."

"This appeared strange; but as love easily infatuates us, what I wished to be true, I readily thought was so.

"I became now pleased with him

more

more than ever; my ideas of him were raised to an exalted height; and I thought myself the happiest person alive, in the prospect of an union with one, who was now become the idol of my soul.

"I had indulged this reverie to such an excess, as to forget the time was elapsed for my return home.

"A sense of duty now took possession of me; and, looking out of the window, I observed it was dusk, and the country quite strange all around.

"Alarmed at this appearance, I chid Mr. Bellamy for introducing a subject, which had entirely taken off my attention from those matters which it was my duty to observe, hinting, that we were quite out of the direction to my home, and entreating him

to

to order the driver to regain the road, and use all possible dispatch. He then spoke sharply to the man, and desired him to quicken his pace as fast as possible.

" This order was obeyed with the greatest promptitude and alacrity, and we whirled on with the utmost rapidity.

" It was now dark---my uneasiness increased, anxiety tortured me with suspense, and every moment added to the horrors of my situation.

" In this state of agitation I earnestly entreated Mr. Bellamy to see if we were in the road to my father's; who now affected the greatest surprise and indignation at the ignorance of the driver in missing the right road; but said at the same time, " That he had no doubt of his getting into the proper track again." " I waited

"I waited in tortures for some time, hoping every minute to arrive; but finding that time only brought additional alarms, no words can describe the agonies I endured.

"I implored Mr. Bellamy, with cries and tears, not to destroy my peace of mind for ever, by soliciting me to a conduct which would be a fatal blow to the happiness of my parents.

"Be not alarmed, my angel," cried he, "you are under the protection of one who will never see you injured!"

"Oh! for Heaven's sake, sir," replied I, "do not urge me to a step, at the thoughts of which I shudder.

"Conduct me back to my parents, and on my knees I will adore you for your goodness!"

"He

"He then took me by the hand, and entreated me to be calm, alledging, that his excessive fondness had prompted him to an action, which might appear to me a breach of confidence; but that his views were honourable, and that it would not be long before he would convince me of the truth of his assertion.

"Tell me, my dear sir," cried I (in a state of inexpressible alarm), "am I in my way to my parents?"

"He then entered into the most moving apology for his conduct, and exclaimed---' Are you not as safe as though you were?'—assuring me he would send immediate notice to them of our marriage.

"He was proceeding, but I could hear no more, and exclaiming—' Oh,

 Heavens!

Heavens! I am undone forever!'—sunk into a fit of insensibility.

"What happened for some time after I can give no account of. When I recovered, I found myself in an elegant room of an inn --a well-dressed person standing by me---Mr. Bellamy at the same time hanging over me with an air of fondness and anxiety, who desired the attendant immediately to withdraw on my recovery.

"Mr. Bellamy," cried I (bursting into a flood of tears), "how could you practise so cruel an artifice on one who has ever entertained the highest opinion of your veracity?---You know not to what a state of wretchedness you have reduced me!"

"Suffer the strongest assurances of an unfeigned passion," replied he, "to atone for the offence; and, believe

lieve me, I have done every thing in my power to soften the uneasiness of your parents, who will have no cause, I am sure, to be wretched, when they find we are irrevocably united."

" I felt some alleviation, amidst my distress, in hearing that Mr. Bellamy had written to my father, and consented at length to take some little refreshment.

" He now sat down by me and said, 'He hoped I would consent to make him the happiest of men; that he had, previously to our setting out, provided every preparation to unite us in indissoluble bands; and that, in the course of half an hour, the parties would be assembled to receive us.'

" You see, my adored Louisa," cried he, " I have been sincere in my professions, and hope you will be

equally so in your reply to this proposal.

"I wish an ingenuous and explicit answer: for though what has passed might appear a little like a violation of the laws of hospitality, yet, I am happy to think, nothing injurious, either to your peace or reputation, can ensue from it."

"I was now in a case of inexpressible perplexity.

"I loved Mr. Bellamy with the most undissembled affection, and could have been happy with him in any station, provided it was with the sanction of my parents' acquiescence; but felt an awful check in engaging in so solemn a contract as he hinted at, in an abrupt and clandestine manner.

"On the other hand, there appeared

peared the strongest air of sincerity in what he proposed.

"I cannot say but love, even in my present circumstances, pleaded strongly in his behalf; besides which, I was already so much in his power, as made it absolutely necessary for me to act in a manner the most honourably to my reputation.

"In this dilemma, the recollection of which I shall bear to the latest moments of my life, love did at length prevail. In the most impressive manner and with tears in my eyes, I intreated him not to impose upon me any additional artifice; that I was about to commit my most sacred interests to his protection, in complying with his request; and that, after the sacrifice of my wishes I should make, in not acquainting my parents in so serious a concern—his conscience must ever

upbraid him, if he treated me with neglect.

"Mr. Bellamy, after soothing me with repeated vows of everlasting fidelity, conducted me to the village-church, where we were united in the most solemn ties.

CHAP.

CHAPTER VII.

"THE next day we set out for Warwick, my husband intending to reside there some time; at which place also, he promised me I should amuse myself with writing to my parents---a circumstance he should not object to at the present, but that he thought the hurry of travelling would hinder me from saying so much as I might choose to do at a more convenient opportunity.

"To this proposal I consented with the greatest cheerfulness, though, I

must confess, it would have made me happier to have taken the earliest opportunity of entering into something like a correspondence with my friends.

"We arrived late in the evening at Warwick, the place he had fixed upon for our residence; and the next day hired a genteel apartment, into which he ushered me, saying—'I hope my dear Louisa will find every thing in this dwelling agreeably to her wishes.'

"When I had in some degree settled myself in this spot, I wrote to my parents requesting their forgiveness for the rash step I had taken; at the same time assuring them, that my husband devoted himself entirely to the study of making me happy.

"That I hoped they would reinstate me and Mr. Bellamy in their good opinion, as an intimation to this purpose would

would render me the happiest of my sex.

"I waited whole weeks under the pleasing expectation of hearing from them, but, alas! flattered myself with a fruitless hope, and I could not prevent the disappointment from preying secretly on my mind.

"My husband conducted himself for a considerable time with the greatest assiduity and tenderness. He was incessantly in my company, during which he tried every means to amuse and entertain me.

"He studied my every wish, and spared no pains to procure me the gratification of it.

"Sometimes he would take a flute, and accompany me on the harpsichord.

" At others, would assist me in the attainment of some language I was unacquainted with.

" Now he would entertain me with some agreeable author, and not unfrequently sit whole hours in admiration at my skill in painting; and, as a relief to our mutual employment, would conduct me in some rural and entertaining excursion.

" In fine, his indefatigable efforts to please produced a heaven in my mind; which, however, was sometimes clouded by a reflection on the possible uneasiness and disquietude of my parents.

" In this delightful manner did time glide away, nor was I altogether without hopes of a completion of my happiness in the mutual smiles both of a husband and a parent!

" But,

" But, alas ! an event was about to take place, which convinced me how delusive are our fondest hopes !

" Mr. Bellamy grew peevish, relaxed in his assiduity towards me, and, instead of expressions of tenderness, confined himself to mere terms of common civility.

" He was not morose ; but there was a distance in his conduct, which cut me to the heart.

" Alarmed at such a woeful change, I examined my own heart, and, after the most faithful scrutiny, I could not accuse myself of a single instance to induce him to abate in his affection for me.

" At length I remonstrated with him on his conduct, and earnestly in-

treated him to disclose to me the object of his uneasiness.

"To which he replied—'He was sorry to see me take up with idle notions and whimsical ideas; and that, as long as I conducted myself with propriety, I need never fear any change in his affection.'

"The coldness of this reply had nearly overcome me. I retired as soon as I could from his presence, and gave vent to a flood of tears.

"Soon after this he told me—'It was inconvenient for him, in many respects, to continue in our present situation; said there was a neat cottage in Wales, considerably nearer to his estates than our present station; and that he hoped I should have no aversion from accompanying him.'

" I told him all places were alike to me with his company, and that I would most cheerfully resort with him to any spot he was disposed to fix on.

" In fact, I only wanted one circumstance to make his commands the highest pleasure to me, and that was the possession of his heart.

" We removed into Wales, which was a journey of considerable distance, and attended with such labour and fatigue, as put me to great inconveniency in my present thriving condition.

" I found on my arrival a neatly fitted-up cottage, such as exactly suited my taste.

" It was rural, romantic and retired; and here I thought to find a heaven in the beauties of the place, and the return of my husband's affections.

" Mr.

"Mr. Bellamy, to my great joy, appeared cheerful, and behaved to me with the tenderness he had formerly been unremitting in.

"I was one day amusing myself with a reverie on the subject, and the approaching prospect of an increase to the family, when he made known to me a wish to pay a visit to some people in the north of England, from whom he had considerable expectations.

"He said, 'He was much concerned to leave me in my present condition; but from the reports he had heard, it was highly necessary to our interest that he should immediately undertake the journey.'

"I submitted to this without repining---yet thought his absence, at this time, a greater trial than it

it would have been on any other occasion. I wished, indeed, to convince him, that my sole aim was to make him happy.

"The next morning my husband departed.

"He left me every sufficient support, and, embracing me tenderly, begged me to submit cheerfully to an event which would operate greatly to our advantage.

"The time passed heavily in my husband's absence. As I made few acquaintances with the inhabitants of the place, I had only those amusements to resort to which it was in my own power to create.

"There were a few select books and a piano-forte, but these were articles only occasionally used by me, being

being in general more devoted to the exercise of the needle.

"Mr. Bellamy wrote to me two or three times after his departure; and at length I had the pleasure to see him return, after an absence of two months.

"He was quite in raptures at the sight of the little cherub I had brought him in the interval, on whom he lavished an excess of apparent fondness.

"Mr. Bellamy appeared in high spirits, and for several weeks we enjoyed a state of uninterrupted happiness.

"One day we were visited by a person, who, Mr. Bellamy stiled an old friend and acquaintance. He informed us, that he was come express to acquaint my husband of the death of a near

near relation, who, it was believed, had left him a considerable property.

"Of all the countenances I ever beheld, that of this man seemed to me the most disgusting. He was, moreover, rude and coarse in his manner, and treated my husband with a kind of bluntness and familiarity which I thought not at all suitable to his manner and appearance.

"As it was late in the day when the messenger arrived, Mr. Bellamy proposed to accompany him early in the morning.

"During the interval, I gave my husband several indirect hints of the pleasure it would afford me to accompany him; but he evaded every overture, by ingeniously turning the discourse into another channel.

" I then requested him to inform me of the place of his destination, which he very civily consented to, and the next morning set off on his journey, promising me a letter as soon as he arrived, and assuring me, in the most earnest manner, that he should stay no longer than the nature of the business required.

" I am now arriving, my dear lady, at the severest part of my sufferings.

" Mr. Bellamy took his leave with a view of never more returning.

" I had a presage on my mind, when we parted, of never beholding him again.

" I knew not any particular reason to justify such an idea; still there was a heaviness on my spirits foreboding some approaching misfortune.

" Several

"Several weeks having passed without a letter from him, I began to be seriously alarmed; still I supported myself every day with the hopes of his arrival.

"At length, having suffered a series of the most torturing suspense, I determined to set off for the place he informed me he was upon a visit to; but no sooner had formed this resolution, than I was cruelly mortified in finding that I had not sufficient money to bear my expences.

"Judge, my dear miss, of the horrors of my situation at this moment—deprived of the hopes of ever seeing my husband again—deserted in a dreary, solitary situation---without a friend or acquaintance, to whom I could impart my troubles---reduced to my last guinea, and incumbered with a few debts, which, to increase my misfor-

misfortunes, were now delivered, accompanied with a peremptory demand for payment.

"Thus situated, I found myself nearly become a prey to despondency.

"Nothing, indeed, would have saved me from utter despair but the thoughts of my dear child---whose preservation from want and destruction now depended solely upon my exertions.

"In a moment of inexpressible sadness I took my little Henry in my arms, pondered on his innocent countenance, and having shed a shower of tears over him, felt myself inspired with sudden vigour to prosecute the journey I had in view.

"I had now to encounter a circumstance, which, however new and painful,

ful, did not chagrin me half so much as the treatment I met with in the event of it.

" I had, since my arrival at the cottage, endeavoured to be as bountiful to my suffering neighbours as prudence would allow.

" I cheerfully assisted them in cases of emergency, and by so doing, have contributed not a little to the elevation of some, who, totally destitute of even common hospitality, turned a deaf ear to my request, and treated my sorrows as the effects of imprudence and misconduct.

" Such sordid characters I have found, by woeful experience, are not uncommon in the world.---Unfeeling beings in a human shape ; but dead to all the tender offices of humanity !

" Not

"Not one of all those who had formerly experienced my bounty would lend a pitying ear to my distress. In short, I met with nothing but evasion and indifference.

"Not a little hurt at the selfishness and perfidy of human nature, I determined on making a sale of my goods; and, even in this instance, I was made the victim of artifice and avarice. My goods were almost given away; and, in the result, amounted to little more than sufficient to pay my arrears and help me on a little in my journey.

"I now felt myself somewhat lighter in having discharged my incumbrances, and having just as much money as I computed would carry me through my journey.

"The occurrences I had met with were an effectual antidote to all pride, and

and I can truly say, when I took my passage in the waggon and found myself and infant reclining upon straw, I felt no other mortification than that, which a sense of Mr. Bellamy's unkindness occasioned me.

" It was a long and tedious journey to Newport. I happened to have, however, very civil fellow-travellers, who having, I believe, a notion that I had seen better days, paid me the most respectful attention.

" The good-nature and civility of one in particular I shall ever have reason to mention with gratitude.

" She was a person about forty years of age, rather of a serious countenance, but agreeably communicative, after having gained some little knowledge of her company.

" We

"We soon came into discourse with each other, and I found, by her instantaneous notice of my child, she was of a humane and motherly disposition.

"My companion was remarkably neat in her person; and, in the course of her conversation, convinced me she was an excellent manager in domestic concerns.

"In short, there was something in her whole air and manner that convinced me she was a woman of prudence, good sense, and discretion.

"Mrs. Clements (the name of the person of whom I am now speaking) informed me she had just been on a visit to her relations, which was her custom twice a year.

"She had a little boy of comely appearance

pearance with her (the child of her adoption as she pleasantly informed me), on whom she bestowed much fondness and attention.

"The waggon halted all night at Bakewell, the place of my companion's residence, who, with much consideration and good-nature, insisted on my accompanying her home--- where I could procure a night's rest without the inconveniency of a low and ordinary public-house.

"Mrs. Clements lived in a neat and comfortable little dwelling, containing three rooms and a back kitchen.

"The room we entered was devoted to the accommodation of a little school, which, with the assistance of her needle and a few articles of merchandise, she contrived to support herself in a neat and comfortable way.

 "After

"After partaking of some refreshment and attending to the consolatory advice of my friend, who, in addition to a punctual regard to religious duties, was, in reality, a christian at heart, I retired to a neat bed-room which she kindly allotted me.

"Although much fatigued, I could not help noticing several inscriptions on the neatly white-washed wall, all of which seemed to be effusions of friendship and respect to my kind hostess.

"These compositions were not of the higher order of poetry; the versification was homely, but exhibited proofs of an honest friendly heart.

"I was so taken with their simplicity, that, notwithstanding my want of rest, I could not refuse my inclination to transcribe some of them.

"Mrs.

"Mrs. Clements, coming up stairs at this moment, informed me they were written by her two brothers, who came upon a visit to her now-and-then; and, to indulge me in my propensity, brought an ink-stand and pens, when I immediately took off the following lines:

" You that desire a friendship that's sincere,
" Stop at this house---you'll surely find it here;
" No ostentatious objects will you see,
" But all the emblems of simplicity;
" True hospitality erects its throne;
" Envy and discord here are never known:
" Then come, my friend, let this be your abode,
" Whether with weary steps you've trod the road,
" Or (with a quick and speedy pace you're blest)
" Come how you will, you come a welcome guest;
" Serenity and peace you e'er will know,
" And all that constitutes your bliss below!"

" I could transcribe no more; my heart smote me when I contrasted the happiness of this family with the misery of my own.

 " I heaved

"I heaved a sigh of contrition, which, I hope, reached the Throne of Mercy!

"Early in the morning, my kind friend prepared a comfortable dish of coffee, and afterwards attended me to the waggon, where she caressed my little infant, cordially shook my hand, wished me success, and advised me to commit my concerns to Providence.

"She then departed, and left on my mind such an impression of her good-nature, friendship, and humanity, as can admit of no pleasure equal to that of repaying her goodness whenever it shall lay in my power.

"I arrived at Tidswell about twelve o'clock in the day; and, notwithstanding my weariness, made immediate enquiries after my long-lost husband.

"I tra-

" I traversed the place the remaining part of the day, and at length found myself so exhausted, that I could move no further.

" After all, to my unspeakable grief and disappointment, I could not gain the least intelligence of him.

" Cruel as it may seem, it appeared too true, that Mr. Bellamy, to avoid any importunities, had given me a false direction.

" Mortified to the extreme, and totally overcome with fatigue, I betook myself to a miserable hovel, where I could extend my weary limbs for the night, at an expence suitable to the exhausted state of my pocket.

" I slept soundly during the night, notwithstanding the wretched and miserable instances of poverty that surrounded

rounded me; and in the morning took my passage in a waggon that was returning back to a place within a few miles of my father's residence, to whom I found myself now disposed to apply, as the last hope of ameliorating my unhappy condition.

"In this second journey, I was not so fortunate in my company; many were the sneers and insults bestowed upon me; to all which I resigned myself without repining; but at the same time could not repress a heavy sigh for my hospitable friend at Bakewell.

"Before I had got half the way to my father's, my money was exhausted, and I had no means of procuring sustenance for my child.

"I did not long hesitate in parting with whatever I could spare in this emergency, and soon found myself in the

the way of being dispossessed of all I had.

"I was obliged from time to time to dispose of various articles of apparel, till at length I was reduced to the wretched habiliments in which you first saw me.

"I now supposed myself arrived at a state of mortification and humiliation that could not be surpassed; still I felt some degree of satisfaction on finding my infant, with what degree of assistance I was able to afford him, appear healthy and cheerful.

"When I quitted the waggon, I travelled over a few extensive fields that led to my father's house; and, when approaching to my native spot, I thought I should have fainted with concern and apprehension.

"Soon as I arrived at the house, no words can express my dread and consternation on observing it shut up and without signs of any inhabitant.

"I sat myself down on a bank close by, and ruminated on the awful circumstance which my indiscretion had, in all probability, produced.

"So strong were my ideas at the present moment, that I burst into a flood of tears, pondered over my unfortunate baby, and beheld him as the only source of comfort left me in the world.

"While I was sitting in a pensive and almost insensible state, there came by a gentleman and lady whom I had formerly known.

"They paused, and surveyed me with attention, while I endeavoured

to

to conceal my face with the mantle that covered me.

"They soon drew nigh, and cast an eye of pity on my child.

"Pretty creature," cried the lady -- "thy homely appearance but ill becomes thy beauty;" and, putting a half-crown piece in each hand, exclaimed---"May the gift become the harbinger of better fortune to thee, my pretty cherub!"

"As they departed, I thought I heard them drop some hints, which I fancied as allusions to my present reverse of fortune.

"I had not been long in this spot, when some labouring people happening to pass by, I enquired how long my father had left his habitation?

" Above a twelvemonth," cried the man to whom I put the question.

" Aye," exclaims another, " poor man! things were strangely altered with him before he went away."

" Upon what account," cried I, ready to die with agitation.

" Something very disagreeable in his family happened---I never knew the rights of it---and then some great man went to law with him, which, I believe, nearly broke his heart; for he went away very disconsolate, and we have been informed, is dying for want in a wretched hovel many miles from here."

" Can you tell me the name of the place?" cried I, in a tone of vehemence and impatience.

"I can't say for a certainty," answered the labourer; "but I believe they call it Rippon, a great way from here, somewhere in Yorkshire."

"I rose immediately, and, thanking my informer, with frantic steps directed my way towards that place.

"I soon got intelligence of the road, which I travelled on foot in an agony not to be conceived; when a dreadful tempest overtaking me in my way, I took refuge in the barn, to which you, my dear miss, had resorted.

"I have now related to you the general heads of my misfortunes; what follows will appear incredible.

"They are particulars known only to myself, and I should forbear describing them, did I not know that the goodness of your heart will com

miserate my sufferings to the utmost, and consider them as some small atonement for the indiscretion I have been guilty of.

"Often have I dipped the hard crust into the brook, when almost ready to perish, and swallowed it with a greediness as if it had been the choicest luxury.

"And, at times, to such an extreme of want have I been driven, as would have made me fly to participate of even such homely fare.

"At the close of day, when destitute of the means of procuring my child a pillow, I have resorted to the barn, where, by glimpse of moonlight, I have pondered over his innocent countenance, and praised God he was insensible of his woe!

"I will

"I will not, my dear miss, burthen your sympathizing mind with a further recital of my woes, but, with your permission, will now conclude by observing, that my unhappy experience has been alleviated in no small degree by your generous and compassionate attention towards me."

CHAPTER VIII.

MONIMIA listened to this affecting narrative with the most profound attention, and often did the heavy sigh and sympathizing tear indicate to Louisa the goodness of her heart.

Soon as the latter had finished her story, Monimia took her by the hand, and told her she should be both proud and happy, not merely in her acquaintance, but to share her esteem as her friend.

She then congratulated herself upon the

the acquisition of a companion, whose good sense and amiable conduct endeared her still more, since the disclosure of her misfortunes.

The two friends now embraced each ther cordially, and Monimia hardly knew how to express sufficiently the regard she experienced for the unfor-unate Louisa.

When the doctor returned, his daughter, with the consent of the unfortunate stranger, immediately made him acquainted with all the particulars of her friend's story, upon which he addressed himself to his visitor in the most agreeable and respectful manner, and told her he should consider her with an equal attention as his own child, and was sensibly affected with her misfortunes, which it would be his study to alleviate as much as lay in his power.

He

He moreover intreated Louisa to consider his house as her home till such time as she should be restored to the possession of those comforts she once enjoyed; and, taking little Henry in his arms, exclaimed—"This little innocent, madam, I consider, from henceforth, as a foster concern of my own. He shall receive every affectionate attention that can contribute to your happiness; and as to the parent who could desert so fair a flower as this, deserves * * * * —but, I beg pardon, I trespass on your feelings (seeing Louisa shed a tear), it is not my place to use reproof now.

"Allow me further, my dear Mrs. Bellamy, to say, that, in me and my daughter, you will ever find sincere friends, such as will have the most minute regard for your happiness, and think themselves amply compensated in

in the possession of a reciprocal friendship and esteem."

Poor Louisa was quite overcome by the doctor's kindness and generosity. She burst into tears, and implored him to spare her for her weakness, assuring him at the same time, that a sense of his goodness was engraved indelibly on her heart; and that the offer of his friendship was a pride and satisfaction to her mind which she could not well express.

She then turned to Monimia, to whom she repeated similar assurances.

The party now sat down to dinner, and exhibited the strongest instances of sociality and regard.

The next day Monimia found out a humane and careful person, whom she recommended as a nurse to little Henry.

Henry. Her name was Mildmay, and she lived in a little cottage about a mile from the vicarage.

It was just a pleasant walk from that place, through winding paths, here-and-there shaded by a copse and shrubbery, which served at times as well against the rain as the scorching beams of the sun.

The doctor and the ladies paid a visit to Mrs. Mildmay, for the purpose of having an opportunity of knowing something of the nurse before the child was committed to her care.

After stopping at the cottage a considerable time, they returned, and Mrs. Bellamy, upon being questioned by the doctor as to the opinion she entertained of the nurse, said, that ---" She thought Mrs. Mildmay a very good sort of woman, and exactly corres-

corresponding with her choice of one to whom she should commit the care of her child."

It was accordingly agreed upon, that little Henry should the next day be put under the care of the prudent and tender Mrs. Mildmay.

This establishment occasioned the family at the vicarage many agreeable jaunts, in some of which the pleasure was enhanced by the engaging company of Orlando, who took a great fancy to the little boy, and seemed highly entertained in diverting him with various little fancies.

The superintendance of the child engrossed the whole of the attention of the family at Ashgrove.

Monimia was highly delighted with the employment, and the doctor was daily

daily interested in the welfare of his charge. As to the affectionate mother, no words can express the happiness she felt in beholding the assiduous care and attention shewn her offspring by two such noble and worthy characters.

It had a highly beneficial effect upon her health, and assisted her greatly to shake off a considerable part of that load of uneasiness, with which she had a long time been afflicted.

The amiable Mrs. Bellamy was, however, still under the impression of sadness.

She had made indefatigable search after her family, but could not gain the least tidings of them.

She concluded, therefore, that they had wandered to some lonely distant spot,

spot, and perhaps ended their days in sorrow and obscurity.

A suggestion like this dwelt upon her heart, and occasioned her many a pensive hour; nevertheless, in consideration of her child, and the solicitude of her friends, Louisa exerted herself to the utmost, to recover her spirits and peace of mind.

The doctor and Monimia entertained increasing esteem for their amiable friend, whose company they importuned on every occasion.

She, however, requested to be as retired as possible; and though the doctor's circle of acquaintance was small, in consequence of being select, she always excused herself when visitors were coming to the vicarage; as also when her kind friends were making a return of the visits they had received.

On such occasions, Mrs. Bellamy took the opportunity of visiting her little boy, with whom she would spend the whole day in innocence and delight.

The doctor and Monimia were too good to insist on any ceremony, which might, in the smallest degree, distress her feelings, or disturb her tranquillity.

CHAPTER IX.

SOME months had now elapsed since our mention of the castle at Bell-grove.

The reader will remember that we left the good lady performing the last ceremonies of attention to her unfortunate patient.

She contrived that he should be interred with every possible mark of respect; and, when the funeral was over, caressed the orphan Julia, whom, from that day, she considered as entirely her own.

In

In adopting this charge, the baroness discovered that she had made choice of one, whose amiable qualities, and goodness of heart, would render her a valuable and interesting companion.

Julia was of the middle stature, elegantly formed, and exhibited such a regular proportion of features, as, upon the first view, excited admiration.

Her countenance was rather interesting than beautiful; nevertheless, from the regularity of her features and a certain bewitching something in her looks, wherever she turned her attention she was sure to captivate.

To a charming person she added all that was winning and agreeable in the mind.

She was tender, affable, and affec-

tionate;

tionate; possessed an uncommon share of good sense, which she exercised rather for the acquisition of improvement, than as a display of so excellent a qualification.

Julia was sincere in her professions, and knew not how to dissemble;

Was grateful in the extreme, and where she had received a favour her heart overflowed with a desire to repay it.

In fine, she possessed an excellent heart, an accomplished understanding, and a disposition so amiable and engaging, as made her the idol of all who knew her.

The baroness felt a pride in having adopted so much goodness; every day increased her partiality for her charge, and she every hour saw in

Julia that which would ennoble the most exalted station.

With the baron Julia was shortly a great favourite.

Her orphan state was sufficient to excite his esteem and compassion; but when he discovered she possessed such worth and excellence, she became endeared to him in an additional respect.

He soon found his charge a very engaging companion.

She would often entertain him with different passages out of the elegant compositions he was partial to, and occasionally amuse him with a favourite tune on the piano-forte.

Sometimes she would discourse with him upon history and the Belles Lettres, in which the baron would greatly

admire

admire her judgment and taste, and at intervals would sit down to amuse him in his favourite game at back-gammon.

The baroness was rejoiced to see Julia become in such a degree the object of the baron's partiality.

She, indeed, possessed that goodness of heart, as to be proud in beholding merit meet its due reward.

To this benevolent lady Julia became an acquisition, which she long had wanted.

After a very little tuition, she relieved the baroness of several little domestic offices, which that lady did not choose altogether to commit to the care of a servant.

The baroness had a high opinion of her

her taste in articles of dress and furniture, and hardly ever determined on the fancy of any thing without first consulting her choice.

To the confidence and esteem reposed in her, Julia was by no means ungrateful, and her happiest employment seemed to be that in which she gave most satisfaction to her benefactors.

It was not merely a sense of duty that gave a spur to her actions in this respect, but the natural goodness of her heart.

The baroness sometimes, in her discourse with Julia, introduced a subject which she thought might induce her to unfold some of the circumstances of her past life.

But this was a point on which the latter

latter appeared rather diffident and reserved.

She had, indeed, been desired by her father, in his dying moments, not to divulge certain particulars, which he said would be best accounted for in the narration he had drawn up.

The baroness entertained an opinion, that the paper committed to her care would be sufficient to disclose the circumstances of the family; but, as she intended Julia to be present at the inspection of it, she was apprehensive so early a detail of misfortunes as it probably contained, would only serve as a renewal of her anxiety and uneasiness.

This consideration and the pensiveness which Julia exhibited at any enquiry, induced her benevolent patro-

ness to be, for the present, entirely silent on the subject.

The baron and his lady had in daily contemplation the future welfare of their adopted charge.

They looked forward to an event her charms and agreeable qualifications authorised them to expect, and, while they were not sparing in instilling into her mind the best of counsel, they both secretly determined she should not want means to put her on a footing equal to any offer that might be made her.

Julia was not only an idol at home, but a very great favourite with the company who visited at the castle.

They were all solicitous to shew her the greatest attention; and, knowing her dependent situation, it was

her real merit they were charmed with.

The baroness was often solicited, by many of her visitors, to permit her *protegé* to pass a month or two with them—a circumstance which she submitted to her own choice, but Julia's heart was entirely with her benefactors, and she knew not how to be absent from them a day.

The personal attractions of this amiable girl had made no small havock among the gay youths who visited at the castle.

So great, indeed, was her influence over them, that a competition was sure to arise who should have the greatest share of attention from her.

In the dance she was looked to as the most accomplished in the room,

and even serious expressions have passed, who should have the happiness of being her partner.

Many were the tender things said to Julia, and not a few were the declarations of love; but it was a language to which she lent a trifling ear, being untainted with ambition; and love was, indeed, a sentiment which had not, as yet, introduced its arbitrary sway into her mind.

CHAP.

CHAPTER X.

ABOUT this time the baron received a letter from Osmond, who informed him that he had settled the affairs of the Horrordale estate; yet, notwithstanding the lapse of time and the most minute investigation, could hear no further tidings of the ruffians who had assaulted his cousin Orlando, they having secured so cautious a retreat as to baffle every enquiry.

The letter further stated, that although he had been at considerable expence to repair and, in some mea-

sure, enliven the castle; yet, the situation was so dreary, that he should by no means choose to make it his continual place of abode.

It concluded with an intimation that he intended shortly doing himself the honour of a visit to Bellgrove.

The baron and his lady were pleased with this instance of Osmond's attention to them; next to the pleasure they felt in his late aggrandizement, they were not a little happy in finding it had not erased that dutiful respect and esteem they had an undoubted right to claim from him.

The family at Bellgrove Castle were, therefore, in daily expectation of a visit from Osmond, whose presence, they thought, would add to the felicities of the place.

Orlando

Orlando had felt himself rather vacant since the departure of his cousin, from whom he had never yet been separated for such a time.

His *ennui*, however, was in no small degree alleviated by his visits to his adorable Monimia and the sensible conversation of Julia, whom he now regarded with all the affection of a sister.

The baron and his lady had been some time under an engagement to visit the vicarage on a certain day, which being arrived, they set off early in the morning, accompanied by Julia.

Orlando could not attend them at that time, having an appointment upon his hands; but promised to be with them at dinner.

Julia had not, as yet, obtained an opportunity to be introduced to the doctor and Monimia, and the baroness having observed a great resemblance between the latter and her *protegé*, wished much to produce an interview between them.

The day being fine induced them to take a circuitous jaunt to the vicarage.

The party in the carriage had arrived at a situation where the beauties of the place invited them to leave their seats, and traverse the rest of the way on foot.

This they thought might be attempted with safety, as Ashgrove village steeple was in sight, and at no such considerable distance as would occasion labour and fatigue.

Just as they had passed through a delightful

delightful little shrubbery, they saw a young girl holding an infant in her arms.

The beauty of the child caught the attention of the baroness and Julia; the former took it in her arms, and the latter was impatient to caress it.

" Whose child is this, my good girl ?" cried the baroness, as she gave the little cherub to Julia.

" Please your grace," answered the the nurse, " it is the parson's who preaches where yonder steeple is."

" Oh! it is," cried the baron (stifling a smile); " I am glad to hear the doctor is likely to have a family about him soon."

" Pshaw, my dear," cried his lady, " the girl has made a mistake; I dare

dare say she will explain herself presently."

"Where do you live," said the baroness?"

"At that cottage between the trees, about a quarter of a mile off," answered the girl.

"Here, child," said the baroness, "is something for your trouble to shew us the way to your mother's."

The girl courtesied and ran to Julia to take her little charge; but she checked her, saying, "No, my dear, I cannot spare him yet; I will take care of him till we get to the cottage."

Julia was, indeed, quite in raptures with the infant, which she often caressed with uncommon fondness.

"Do

"Do you think, my dear madam," cried she, with earnestness in her countenance, "that the doctor would suffer us to have this charming little boy with us for a week or two?"

The baroness smiled at her simplicity, and, turning to the girl, asked her, "How long her mother had been intrusted with the child?"—Who replied, that "The parson and his lady had brought it about a month ago."

The baroness was now urged by still greater curiosity to pay a visit to the cottage; she could learn no other story from the girl than what we have related, and the whole appeared such a mystery, that she felt greater impatience to have it unravelled.

As to the baron he had not been diverted so a long time; for though he was not inclined to take the girl's story literally

literally as it stood; yet, there was something so abrupt and blunt in her manner of speaking, that made him every now-and-then ready to burst out at the thought of it.

When they arrived at the cottage, the baroness entered into conversation with the nurse, who seemed to be not a little concerned at something that had recently happened.

"We are come, my good woman, to make some enquiries respecting this sweet little fellow that we have met with in our way. Your daughter informs us Dr. Pritchards is the parent of it."

"You will, I hope, madam," cried the nurse, "pardon the ignorance of my poor girl, who, seeing the doctor come on a visit to little Henry, has supposed him to be the father."

"Does

"Does any body accompany the doctor in his visits?"

"Yes, madam; sometimes his daughter; but never without little Henry's mama; a lady, I assure you, madam, of much goodness of heart and doatingly fond of her little boy."

"Do you expect her here this morning?" cried the baroness.

"Alas!" replied the nurse, "I do not know when I shall see her again. There is great distress at the vicarage."

"My young lady and her father came in an agony, yesterday, to enquire if Henry's mama was at the cottage, and upon my saying, I had not seen her the whole of the day, they both departed very disconsolate."

The nurse now took the child and exclaimed—"Ah, my little dear, what will you do without your mama?"

The baroness and Julia felt some emotion at little Henry's loss, and viewed him as a still more interesting object than before.

They now rose to proceed to the vicarage, when Julia, with a disconsolate countenance, requested she might carry the infant a little way; and the baroness, feeling a liking for the child, entreated the nurse to spare him for a short time.

This the latter consented to, requesting permission to accompany them.

When they had proceeded to a certain distance, Julia, with reluctance, parted with her engaging little companion;

panion; and in a short time the baron and his party arrived at the vicarage.

They found Monimia and the doctor not a little disconcerted at the event which had happened.

The baron walked up to them, and exclaimed—"My dear friends, we have just now anticipated the circumstance of your uneasiness, therefore need not ask you the cause of it."

The doctor seemed surprised, and the baron continued.

"Happening to come by a cottage in our walk, we espied the sweetest little fellow, I think, I ever saw; and, in consequence of some enquiries, found that the mother resided at your house, but had suddenly disappeared: Pray, my good sir, have you discovered any thing of the lady hitherto?"

The

The doctor replied in the negative, observing, "That it was an event as extraordinary as unexpected."

Just as they had commenced this conversation, Orlando arrived.

Soon as he entered the room he flew to Monimia, whom he addressed with the warmest wishes for her welfare; but was alarmed when he saw the alteration in her countenance, and tenderly enquired the cause.

"Alas! sir," cried Monimia, "I have lost my affectionate friend, and in a manner so sudden and secret, that I dread some fatal accident has happened to her."

Orlando looked serious at the affair; but endeavoured, as much as lay in his power, to lighten her apprehensions.

This

This adventure threw a gloom over the company, and the loss of Louisa was the general topic of the day.

Our hero was more than usually interested in the person of the lovely Monimia.

That pensiveness which dwelt upon her countenance gave an infatuating loveliness to her looks.

It afforded him also a striking instance of the goodness of her heart.

He was pleased to see such sincere friendship, and was proud of that mind, where pity and soft compassion dwelt.

He was indefatigable in his assiduities, and tried every means to soothe the dejection of Monimia; and, at times, thought himself successful in his endeavours. Though

Though the day was dull, it increased the interest they felt in each other's company.

Orlando did not forbear to hint many tender things to Monimia; and, by the favourable manner they were received, he entertained hopes his person was not indifferent to her.

From this period we may consider their mutual attachment as ripening into a pure and lasting affection.

A congeniality of sentiment and soul taught them they were born for each other; and not an interview occurred, but what cemented their affection.

Monimia daily saw fresh charms in Orlando; and Orlando, at every meeting, discovered something to increase his passion and esteem for Monimia.

After

After tea, the party at the vicarage set out upon a walk to the cottage.

The little nursery had occupied a great part of their conversation, for whom they, one and all, entertained sentiments of pity and commiseration.

The baron and the doctor, in the course of the walk, commenced an interesting discourse upon historical matters---Julia held the arm of the baroness- -while Orlando and Monimia, from some unaccountable circumstance, kept at a distance behind.

The conversation of the two latter became so interesting, that they did not perceive that the company before had gained considerably on them.

Monimia remarked it with surprise, but our hero rejoiced in a circumstance which gave him an opportunity of

of making an avowal of his passion for her.

Taking her by the hand as she was preparing, in a quick pace, to join the company—

"Stay, I conjure you," cried he, "and suffer me to divulge a passion which I have long entertained for you."

Monimia appeared surprised and confused at this declaration, and, in a tremulous voice, exclamed—"Mr. Bellgrove!!"

"Pardon, my adorable Monimia, the effusions of a genuine love; if I have embarressed you, by an abrupt assertion of it, impute it to an excess of admiration of the perfections you possess."

Monimia

Monimia appeared thoughtful and reserved; at length recovering from her reverie, exclaimed—

"Mr. Bellgrove, I am sure you do not intend to insult me; but you must be sensible this is a language to which I am not accustomed, and which I ought not attend to, without mature deliberation."

"Be not offended, my angel," cried Orlando, "my intention is only to do justice to your charms."

"I know not how to reply, Mr. Bellgrove, to so flattering a strain as you have adopted, unless it be that you think too highly of what little merit your partiality may suppose me to possess."

"That can never be, angelic creature!" cried Orlando, "and could I hope

hope you will look benignly on my professions, my happiness were unutterable!"

"You cannot doubt of my esteem, sir."

"Esteem! Monimia; do not use a term so cold!—

"Suffer me to hope my affection merits something more."

Monimia chid Orlando for introducing a subject to which she knew not how to reply.

He apologized a second time for his ardour, saying, "Her virtues and nobleness of soul had captivated him, and that he could not refrain from asserting, that he admired, that he loved, and that he adored her!"

Monimia

Monimia appeared not a little embarrassed at so frank a declaration; she blushed and hesitated for a reply; which our hero considering as a favourable moment for his importunities, continued---

"Say, oh! say, you look benignly on my protestations!"

"To assert, my dear sir," cried Monimia, "that I view your expressions with indifference, would be to practice a dissimulation I despise.

"I will be further candid enough to say, that if I should ever entertain something more than esteem for any one, you will, undoubtedly, have the preference; but pray, dear sir, do not urge a conversation like this---as I dare not, cannot, would not entertain any sentiment, but what is wholly au-

 thorised

thorised by my father's good opinion and consent."

Orlando was charmed with her good sense, and was about to reply in a strain of admiration; when, having passed through a cluster of trees, and turning into a lane, they found themselves within a small distance of the company.

The baron began to be jocular with Orlando, and, after rallying him upon dividing the pleasure of the company by engrossing Monimia entirely to himself, turned immediately to his companion and cried---" You must scold Monimia, doctor, for appearing averse from the company.

" Come, miss," continued the baron, " I don't know what I shall say to you, if you make my son behave so rude again."

Monimia's countenance became scarlet at this jocular reproof, and, turning to Orlando, exclaimed---" I must leave it to your eloquence, sir, to reinstate me in the favour of the baron."

CHAPTER XI.

THE party now arrived at the cottage, where they found little Henry returned from an airing, with a complexion blooming as the rose, and a countenance denoting innocence and health.

Julia flew to him for a kiss, and, as she caressed him, a tear fell down her cheek on recollection of his orphan state.

"Nurse," said the doctor, "we are come to render all the consolation to

to this little babe that we can, and it is no small satisfaction to us to have committed him to the care of one who will shew him the utmost tenderness."

The nurse courtesied and ejaculated —" Poor lady! how happy she would be to embrace her little darling again."

In the course of their stay at the cottage, Monimia applied to her father to have little Henry home with them---a request which he most willingly consented to, and intimated the circumstance to Mrs. Mildmay, who received the information with tears.

The doctor compassionated the feelings of the nurse, and, to render the matter more agreeable, told her she might take up her residence for a while at the vicarage with her little charge.

This

This was assented to with joy by Mrs. Midmay; and the party, with their newly-added member, set out upon their return.

Julia and Monimia contended every now-and-then who should carry the little fellow.

There existed in the minds of these two amiable females such a congeniality of soul, as was soon kindled into an undissembled esteem for each other.

At the first sight Monimia felt a certain power of attraction towards her friend, while Julia, at the same moment, experienced an instinctive regard for the interesting person of Monimia.

No wonder, then, that a few hours conversation should have produced a sincere and ardent attachment between them. "I shall

" I shall insist upon having little Henry with me at the castle a short time," said Julia to her friend; " I really must not be denied his charming company."

" Then you must not keep him long," replied Monimia.

" Oh, you need not fear being separated from him," said Julia; " you shall do me the honour of your company at the same time."

" You are too good, my dear Julia," replied the other, " indeed you are; but I intend you shall favour me with a stay at the vicarage first, and then we will debate about your proposal."

In this manner did the lovely friends amuse themselves till they arrived at the vicarage.

After

After the party had spent a very social evening together, the baron and his family returned to the castle, where they found Osmond just arrived, who saluted his relations with cordial respect, and paid his court to Julia with a degree of animation that denoted his admiration of so interesting a figure.

Between Orlando and Osmond continued to subsist a mutual good understanding for some time---the latter, for certain purposes, wishing to be on the best of terms with the family.

The truth was, he had fixed an insidious eye on the lovely inmate of the castle, and was determined to spare no exertions to effect his purpose.

Even in affairs of love his policy was tantamount to his passion, and he thought

thought it better to be deliberate and sure, than to wholly ruin his cause by rashness and precipitation.

While he was daily amusing himself with his suggestions on this point, the indulgent baron was not at all aware of the viper he was cherishing under his own roof; he had, indeed, at times entertained some ideas of deceit in him---but Osmond's incomparable address, and the happiness his uncle felt at his important elevation, had entirely banished every recollection of the kind.

The baron was, therefore, not at all uneasy at the attention Osmond paid to Julia; but, on the other hand, wished it might eventually ripen into love.

Every thing had been on a happy footing for some time at the castle; several

several visits had been received from the vicarage, which were returned with an equal share of friendship.

Monimia and Julia became, at every interview, more attached to each other; in short, nothing could exceed the harmony that now existed between the family of the baron and that of the doctor.

That growing attachment between Orlando and Monimia was now arrived to a degree of maturity—a circumstance, which the respective parents beheld with delight, and even hints had passed between them respecting the day which should render the lovers supremely happy in each other.

In the mean time, Osmond had practised various artifices to win the affections of Julia.

He

He had rouzed up all his powers of insinuation---had tried the force of the most specious flattery---accommodated his sentiments to her taste in every thing---affected to prefer her company at all times, and to be restless when it was not in his power to confine his conversation solely to her.

To all which importunities Julia appeared neither indifferent, nor captivated in the degree which he had flattered himself with the hopes of.

The truth was, her affection for the baron and baroness was such, that she could do no otherwise than esteem, in no ordinary degree, those who claimed an affinity with them.

Orlando's virtues and amiable qualities she admired in the highest degree, and loved him with all the attachment

tachment of a sister; and Osmond's affinity to the family she considered as a claim to an equal share of her esteem.

On the whole, she considered his assiduities as arising from a wish, in some measure, to imitate the example of tenderness and attention shewn by the baron and baroness to a helpless and unprotected orphan.

Osmond soon discovered her insensibility to his passion; it chagrined him at first; but he was not one readily inclined to despair: he knew that there were several avenues to the heart, and was determined to try all before he totally gave up the point.

As he was one day walking round the beautiful grounds about the castle, he suddenly espied Julia sitting in an alcove,

alcove, and looking very attentively at a book she held in her hand.

He immediately stole round unobserved, and, making his appearance suddenly, exclaimed—

"What is the delightful subject, Julia, which thus engrosses all your attention?"

Julia looked up with surprise, and exclaimed---"Is it you, sir!"

"I vow I must see the subject of your meditations," cried he, playfully, taking the book out of her hand.

"It is a mournful one," cried Julia.

Osmond cast his eye on the page, and read—

"A mur-

" A murderous wretch !——
" 'Twas I—these felon hands !—with treacherous love
" I clasp'd her in this curst embrace—I bore her
" In these detested arms, aud gave that beauty,
" That tender form, to a remorseless death !—
" Plunge me, ye furies, in your lakes of fire—
" Here fix—fix all your vultures in my heart ;—
" And lo !---they rush upon me.——See !---see there !---
" With racks and wheels they come ;---they tear me ! ;"

On a sudden he appeared agitated, turned pale, and stammered out---" How can you choose a subject so dismal, miss ?"

" I am fond of the pathetic, sir---but you seem ill."---

" A mere nothing, I assure you, Julia---a slight giddiness seized me while reading---but I am now recovered."

Osmond

Osmond then excused himself, and, abruptly taking his leave, with hurried steps quitted the garden.

END OF VOLUME II.

PRINTED BY

J. NORRIS,

No. 2,

OLD ROUND-COURT,

STRAND,

LONDON.

1803.